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get social...



Welcome to another issue in which we've tried to cover the usual wide range of different subjects of interest to road transport enthusiasts with an eye to the past. I do enjoy the way our contributors are always coming up with fresh material, which often stems from something they've seen from somebody else.

Equally, when I receive an article or I'm looking through the Stilltime Collection myself, for a 'Scenes Past' feature, or to add to something else, I will see a picture of a vehicle which will lead to another subject which we can look at.

Another great source of ideas is old magazines, like copies of Commercial Motor and others from way back, which offer ideas or fill in gaps, adding information to what we already have.

A good case of this is the picture on the cover. I knew this was an Albion Luton van (pantechnicon?) at the 1960 show, but when I happened to look through the particular issue of CM in which it appeared, I had much more to say about it. This is not always the case, as not all the Stilltime pictures we use made it into the magazines back then.

It must be frustrating, now as it was then, for the photographers, who take loads of pictures at an event, operator visit or whatever, then just a couple make it into the article. At least more of them are being used now in Vintage Roadscene!

It's surprising how often I will be looking through a magazine which Malcolm Bates or one of the others has lent me to illustrate an article and I'll have a look through and find something else which is connected with

another of our articles. A good example is the advert on this page.

At the same time, for many of the pictures we use, we have to work out a lot of the detail from what we can see, while relying on our background knowledge of the type of vehicle, the event, the industry or the location shown. This detective work can be quite fun as well as hard work although, of course, it's easy to make mistakes and difficult to be an 'expert' on everything. We often have to make assumptions, which can prove to be wide of the mark. Somebody with personal knowledge of, say, a place or an operator, will know better.

This is where your letters come in. It's good to have any extra details and, yes, corrections to keep the record straight, although I occasionally have to filter out personal criticisms, which don't help...

I'm glad to say that it's the exception, rather than the rule, to receive a letter which says: "Why don't you get historians who know what they are talking about?" Well, we all do the best we can and, if you know more about the subject, why not share your information in a more positive way. We like to use everyone's letters, as they are all interesting and add to our knowledge.

I'm delighted to learn from the sales figures that the number of subscriptions to Vintage Roadscene has increased, which means more of you are regular readers. Rest assured we'll do our best to provide you all with as much road transport nostalgia as we can – and with as much detail as we can, which we hope will be as accurate as possible as well. If not, tell us; who knows, it might lead to another interesting article in the future...

## ON THE COVER...



This month we are looking again at Luton vans, with an interesting selection of them from across the years. This picture appeared in the September 30, 1960 show issue of Commercial Motor, which we were looking through in connection with last month's article on Earls Court. The caption reads: 'The Arlington Motor Co Ltd built this 1,800 cu ft pantechnicon body, based on an Albion Victor 17 ft 3 in wheelbase chassis. The bodywork is of light alloy and the vehicle is finished in light blue, with a yellow section above the front bumper, conveying a most attractive appearance', with which we must agree. (CHC aab199)

THE COMMERCIAL MOTOR NOVEMBER 12 1965

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IF YOU'VE GOT A LOAD TO MOVE—GET A SCAMMELL

This advert appeared on the back page of Commercial Motor, dated Friday, November 12, 1965, which covered the Scottish commercial show, and is mentioned in Malcolm's article on magazines for the industry. The ad for the new Scammell Trunker twin-steer unit features the slogan 'If you've got a load to move – get a Scammell', which is also mentioned in Norman Chapman's article on Scammell Trailers in this issue. I love looking through old magazines at the adverts from time gone by. They are not only attractive, with old pictures or illustrations, there is so much to learn from them. Maybe we'll feature more in a future issue...



# BMC FG AMBULANCES



*Ron Henderson looks at ambulances on what we might think was a surprisingly popular chassis.*

Over the years, most light commercial vehicle and van chassis have been adapted for ambulance duties, some more widely than others, such as the Morris LD and Bedford J1 in particular, which had lengthy production runs. Even to this day ambulances are still based on standard van chassis.

There is a philosophy within the ambulance profession that no matter how perfect a vehicle is, ambulance staff will still find faults with it. It was often asked: "Why don't manufacturers design a vehicle especially for ambulance duties?" Looking back in history, this was

actually done on two occasions.

London Ambulance Service and the National Research Development Council participated in the design of a low level, front wheel drive vehicle designed by Ogle and constructed by Reeves on a French-built Sovam chassis to replace London's fleet of LD ambulances but, after trials with the prototypes, the novel

design was not proceeded with. Dennis Bros, of Guildford, also undertook the costly process of designing a purpose-built ambulance on a new FD4 chassis. Only three examples were built, which were eventually placed into service with Rutland, Surrey and St John's Ambulance Service, but no more were sold and no further developments took place.

**Top:** This dual-purpose ambulance with the factory FG front assembly and Lomas coachwork was supplied new to Darlington Borough Council in 1970. It was pictured at Durham in 1975 after the Borough's ambulance fleet was incorporated into Durham County Ambulance Service.

**Right:** Another Lomas ambulance, but with a shorter wheelbase and hinged cab doors. This Austin FG was exported to Australia, for use in Sydney. It was the city's biggest ambulance, offering a 125% increase in interior space compared with existing vehicles, and could carry four stretcher patients. (Greg Taylor)







**Left:** Devoid of any chassis maker's identity, this 1972 FG ambulance featured coachwork by Appleyards of Leeds. It was one of a number supplied to Leeds City Ambulance Service, all of which were incorporated into the newly-formed West Yorkshire Metropolitan Ambulance Service in April 1974.

**Right:** Wadhams of Waterlooville, Hampshire, supplied many ambulances on FG chassis, including these 60 cwt welfare coaches for clinic work. They could carry 22 seated passengers, plus driver and attendant, or nine wheelchairs, and came with an optional electro-hydraulic tail lift at the rear. This one was supplied to Durham County Ambulance Service in 1972.

**Below:** An interior view of the Sydney FG ambulance. Typical of British ambulances of the period, the seats on the off-side could be inverted, allowing a stretcher to be housed on runners on the underside of the seat. A steel frame assembly could be attached to the side-walls to accommodate a further two stretchers above the existing two. (Greg Taylor)



Cost was one of the overriding factors, with the purchase price being much greater than conventional conversions, owing to manufacturers having to recoup their research and development costs. The annual demand for new ambulances was estimated to be only about 400 vehicles per year; not enough to warrant the production of a dedicated ambulance chassis. So commercial van conversions continued.

Van conversions, particularly of Austin-Morris, Ford and Bedford vehicles predominated but, in 1959 at that year's Commercial Motor Show, with the launch of the Morris FG chassis, also produced under the Austin marque, this became another natural chassis for conversion for ambulance work, although rather a large one.

Ambulance services would continue to settle for adapted builders' lorries or bakers' vans.

One of the innovative selling points of the FG was the 'angle planned' or 'threepenny bit' cab with its recessed backward-opening cab doors, designed for safe and easy access and egress.

Initially three models were offered, covering two, three and four ton payloads, on a wheelbase of 145 inches. The engines offered were a BMC four cylinder petrol engines rated at 90 bhp at 3,000 rpm, or a four cylinder 3.4 litre diesel engine, rated at 68 bhp at 2,600 rpm. It was not long before the major ambulance coachbuilders adopted the chassis for new ranges of ambulances, although few incorporated the full angle planned cab.

Appleyards of Leeds offered a stretcher case





**Above:** The Wadhams VI ambulance body on this Leyland FG for Surrey was also available on the EA chassis. Dating from 1972, this type of vehicle was used by Lancashire, Surrey and Hertfordshire ambulance services. The three Newcastle 'Police' Ambulances, as the accident and emergency vehicles were so called were also of this type, all with automatic transmission. (N Tarling)

ambulance, available on 9ft 6ins or 10ft 9ins wheelbases, with front assembly and body built to their own design and not bearing any resemblance to the original BMC design. The company also designed a sitting case version.

Lomas of Wilmslow, Cheshire also produced ambulances on the FG chassis, which featured the BMC front scuttle, but with a choice of hinged or sliding cab doors.

Wadhams Bros of Waterlooville, Hampshire, offered versions of dual-purpose ambulances on 10ft 9ins wheelbases, with either the factory front end, the Wadhams Mark V or a completely new in-house designed body, the Mark VI, which had a moulded grp front end, roof and sliding cab doors.

Capable of carrying one stretcher patient, or four sitting patients, plus the attendant, the vehicle was offered with a choice of both petrol



**Above:** Hertfordshire Ambulance Brigade, a former joint fire and ambulance service, and Lancashire County Ambulance Service used these long wheelbase Wadhams conversions for clinic work. Based on the 40cwt chassis, with four litre petrol engine, this one dating from 1972 could accommodate six sitting cases and four wheelchairs. In common with most of the brigade's fleet it was furnished with unpainted natural aluminium panels.



**Above:** An unusual and unique conversion of a Morris FG/Wadhams Series VI ambulance, with a roof extension giving increased headroom. Built for Surrey Fire Brigade, it was based at Reigate and used as mobile control unit at large or prolonged incidents.

and diesel engines and an option of automatic transmission for the petrol-engined model. Sitting case versions based on 40 cwt chassis with extended wheelbases were also offered, with accommodation for up to 12 sitting cases and four wheelchair bound patients. Lancashire and Hertfordshire ambulance services used these types.

The FG ambulance was one of the bigger types of its time and would never win any races, but the variety of wheelbases and payloads made it an attractive option for many ambulance services, until the advent of the Bedford CF and Ford Transit.





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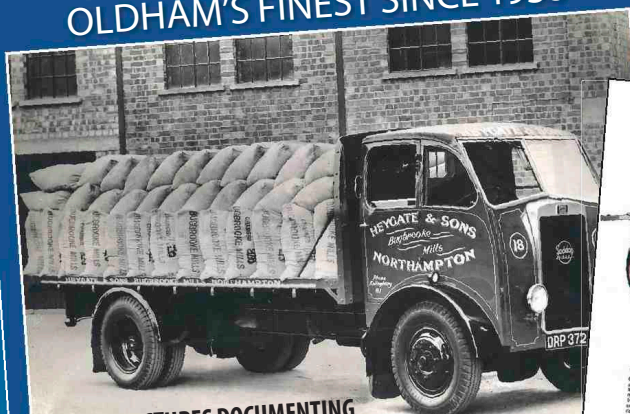
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# KINGS OF THE ROAD - Australian Road Trains

*John Greeves* wrote about these giants of the Outback last month. Here we follow up with some more great pictures of the vehicles past and present.

**Part 2**



**Above:** With a Gardner engine badge reflected on the open door of its cab, this modified International tractor unit is pulling three trailers, carrying a smaller lorry and tractor, as well as plenty of crated goods. (Northern Territory Library)

**Left:** Its platform loaded with sacks and trailer with bales – probably wool – a Diamond T sets off with passengers in unlikely places... (Northern Territory Library)



**R**oad Trains are an integral part of the Australian Outback, as there are no rail routes into the Northern Territories. Road trains not only transport fuel, ore and cattle, but also household freight and most other supplies. The Northern Territory where they mainly operate is a land of vast contrast and scale. Along the 1,745 kilometres of highway from Kulgera to Darwin the climate can vary widely

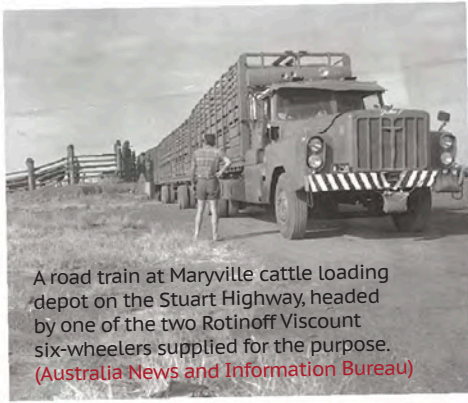
but vast areas are basically desert.

The First Australian Road Trains were traction engine pulling multiple wagons, from which were developed trains pulled by motor vehicles, notably the AEC Government Road Train in 1934, discussed last month. The pioneer of the modern cattle road train was Kurt Johannsen, with his Diamond T980, known as 'Bertha', like the AEC now in the National Road Transport Hall of Fame in Alice Springs. The only two

Rotinoff Viscounts were purpose built for road train use by Vestey in 1957. Fodens, then Macks also made a big impact, with American vehicles now the main types used.

Here are pictures of a range of old and new types of vehicle engaged in this gruelling work, where tarmac-surfaced roads cannot be taken for granted and drivers have to be self-sufficient and able to look after their vehicles and loads.





A road train at Maryville cattle loading depot on the Stuart Highway, headed by one of the two Rotinoff Viscount six-wheelers supplied for the purpose.  
(Australia News and Information Bureau)



The original AEC Road Train prime mover loaded up and pulling two trailers.  
(Northern Territory Library)



This Diamond T is hooked up to a total of five trailers and looks ready to take off. (Northern Territory Library)



The first Government Road Train from the 1930s is seen with two trailers outside a cattle station. (Northern Territory Library)









**Above:** A Buntine Roadways Kenworth cab-over eight-wheeler heads two trailers as a cattle train between the Northern Territory and Queensland (Northern Territory Library) **Above inset left:** A more recent Mack with three cattle trailers (Richard Mohr Collection). **Above inset middle:** A Kenworth of Tanami Transport crosses the Tropic of Capricorn. (Richard Mohr Collection). **Above inset right:** A modern Volvo with four trailers carrying fuel for Shell at Alice Springs. (Richard Mohr Collection).

**Left 1:** A Kenworth with three tanker trailers of Pioneer Road Services at Renner Springs. (Richard Mohr Collection)

**2:** A Mack with three cattle trailers seen leaving Darwin. (Richard Mohr Collection)

**3:** A road train carrying pipes, headed by a Mack B61, makes its way along a rough tarmac road back in 1971. (National Archives of Australia)

**4:** A Mack six-wheeler heads three trailers, all with cattle bodies, on a dirt road back in 1970. (National Archives of Australia)

**5:** Bull's Northern Territory Express Kenworth with three container trailers at Emerald Springs. (Richard Mohr Collection)

**6:** Two Mack Road Trains outside Road Train base. (Northern Territory Library, William Prince Collection).

**7:** The Kenworth Display Hall at the National Road Transport Hall of Fame at Alice Springs (Daves Travel Corner)

**8:** A road train headed by a Mack with cattle containers, stopped at Elliot. (Northern Territory Library, Roger Freeman collection)

**Right:** The famous 1934 AEC road train is now restored and can be seen at the National Road Transport Hall of Fame at Alice Springs. (Daves Travel Corner).







# Caught in Time - Breakdown lorries

*Allan Bedford's collection of photographs, which we have been publishing under the 'Caught in Time' banner, include a number of pictures of interesting breakdown vehicles – some of them taken more recently than you might think...*

It is not so long ago that breakdown vehicles tended to be among the most likely older commercials which we would see on the roads or awaiting their next call-out. It's not the case so much these days, with ever larger specialised wreckers for the recovery of commercials and more technical vehicles – with slide-back bodies or 'spectacle plates' to recover lighter vehicles. They are all run by specialist companies, not the local garage or haulage company.

In the 'good old days', it would be a lightweight chassis, often an ex-tipper or tractor unit, with a crane and maybe some design of chariot body to drag in the light vehicles, with a time-expired member of the fleet, which perhaps was not so worn out as the rest, or an ex-military vehicle for transport companies. We've already had a look and commented on bus company breakdown vehicles.

Most of these pictures were taken not so long ago, showing types of vehicle which could once be seen all over the place, but which have disappeared now. We might see them at rallies, but memories of them in use are beginning to fade away.



Going back further, to September 1969, Allan saw this 'nice little Bedford M Type' at the Fraser Road Service Station in Erith, Kent, on trade plates 641 LH, near a Watney pub, the Nordenfeldt Arms. He says the garage was located in an area known locally as 'the Pom Pom', as shells for these guns were produced in their thousands by the local Vickers factories during World War I.



**Left:** This lovely old Scania-Vabis L75, on trade plates 847 KE, in the livery of Winters of Strood, was seen parked outside the 'Halfway House, in Lower Road, between Erith and Belvedere in Kent, its crew waving happily to the man with the camera. There's a Bedford TM in the background of the picture, taken in March 1979 and, with its twin-boom crane, the vehicle looks ready to tackle just about anything.

**1:** Also in September 1969, this former BRS Parcels Thornycroft Trident(?) tractor unit was seen at the Fraser Road Service Station on trade plates 292 GN, scheduled for conversion to a recovery vehicle, but Allan does not know whether this was ever achieved.

**2:** This old Morris-Commercial 'CV' of Leytonstone Motors was one of those 'It'll always be there', on the old A11 at Leytonstone, in East London. Amazingly, it was still there in May 1980, carrying trade plates 502 LO, when Allan stopped one day to capture it for posterity.

**3:** This Leyland Landtrain was seen on the A21, when Allan was on his way to the 2002 HCVS London to Brighton run. Registered Q213 RNH and run by Auto Renovations, it was parked on the opposite carriageway, so a quick turn via the exit sliproad and back again was required to record this one.



Some of the more youthful examples might be considered by some people to be less interesting than those from earlier times, but they are all part of our road transport heritage and deserve not to be forgotten. Equally, some of the operators' names seen here will bring back memories as well.

Our roads have become filled with commercial vehicles from the various European manufacturers these days. The only thing wrong with them is the fact that they have almost entirely replaced vehicles from the British manufacturers who supplied our transport industry for so long.

Have a look through the following pages and see how many of these vehicles you had forgotten...







**Left:** This well-kept Ergo-cabbed Leyland wrecker, EMF 875J, retro-fitted with a later style of grille, spent a while on stand-by on the coast-bound stretch of the A2, near Dartford Heath, in March 2000. Allan says a 'reccie' proved that the only safe way to approach it was via a housing estate, a public park, a hawthorne thicket and a clamber up an embankment. All worth the effort, but his trousers were only fit for the garden after this adventure...

**Below:** This Austin K4 'loadstar' had come south of the river to Erith, where it kept company with a nearly-new Ford 'D' Series in summer 1977. It was new to Wells, of Woodford, Essex, when this company sold nothing but 'Austin of England'. Some additional information was supplied by Tony Collings, a well-known figure in the preservation scene, who was a storeman at Wells for most of his working life. This was a 5 ton tipper chassis, bodied by Popplewells Coachworks, of nearby Epping, and finished in the Austin beige and red 'house colours', but by 'British Leyland' days, it carried a blue livery. J & H still trade in Fraser Road, Erith, where this picture was taken.



**Left:** Whenever possible, Allan visited Blackheath, London SE2, when the fair was in place to see and photograph the lorries. On this occasion in August 2003, adjacent to the field, this less-than-immaculate Ford Transit 'beaver-tail', LPX 782X, was about to recover this sad old Capri, but where was the crew? Perhaps the recovery vehicle was also in need of help?

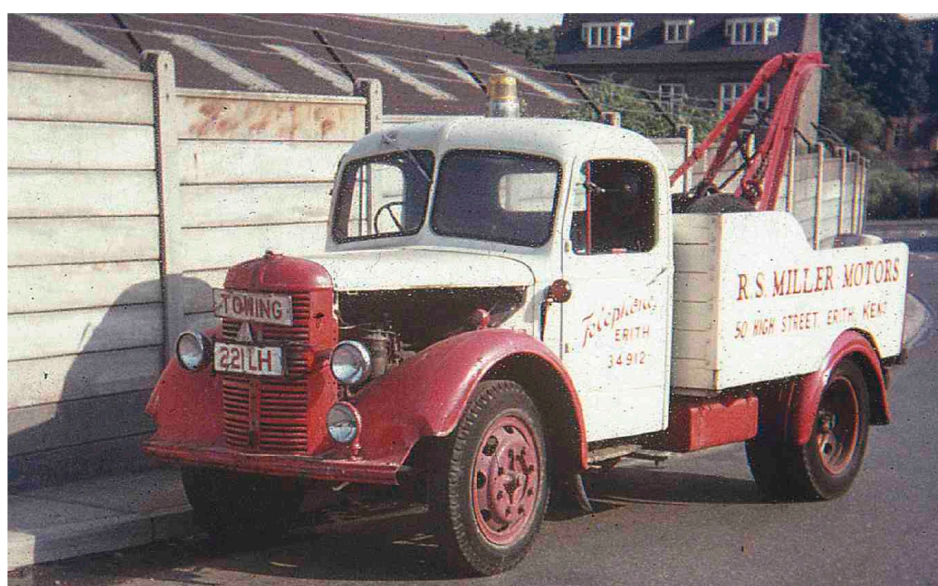


**Above:** Allan says that to capture this Thornycroft 'Big Ben', Q754 VMD, in January 1996, he nearly went 'A over T' on the icy ground, as the lorry gently ticked over at a wintry trading estate.





**Above:** During the dualling of a section of the A206 at Perry Street, Crayford, Kent, during 1996, this Seddon Atkinson 3-11 six-wheeler, A338 MTM, of Auto Speed Recovery was based at a roundabout, next to temporary accommodation for approximately three months, but Allan never saw it in action.



**Below:** Seen one evening in July 1988, in the lovely East Devon village of Beer, this 1961 Dorset-registered Thames Trader, SPR 40, looked as if it had long since recovered its last breakdown.



**Above:** Back in July 1976, seen at the height of that scorching summer, this Bedford 'M' Type, on trade plates 221 LH was used by a small repair garage in Erith. The owner could not understand Allan's interest in this battered old beauty. With the old deep wharf buildings behind the wall and Clarkes Coal Office to the right, this area was totally transformed in 1998, when Morrisons opened its first store 'in the south' right here!



# Scrapyard Scene – Another Visit

*Another helping of pictures from **Andy Ballisat** of lorries awaiting their fate at the Rush Green Motors scrapyard in Hertfordshire.*



**Above:** A Bristol HA6G tractor unit, thought to be 60 CUH – no prizes for guessing which fleet it came from – sits beside a Scammell Trunker, which presumably worked with a bulk tipping trailer. The glass-fibre cabs have survived quite well, all things considered. They are in a part of the yard which had recently been tidied up, when this picture was taken at the end of 2008. There's a Foden S21 cab behind the Bristol's and a 1960s BMC 'Pilot' cab in the background, too.

It's been around a year since we last visited the yard – photographically, as it were – and as this has proved a popular feature with many readers in the past, it seemed appropriate to use another selection of Andy's pictures in the magazine.

They were taken over the course of a number of years. In some cases, we can see how the vehicles have deteriorated over the time they have been left standing. A few have escaped to be restored to their former glory, or at least to provide parts for other vehicles. Others have just literally rotted away, which is sad. But at least they weren't all just quickly reduced to small cubes of metal, with the wood and other materials burnt.

We don't want anyone running away with the idea that they can turn up at the yard to find any of these vehicles just as we see them here, all ready to be towed or carried away to a great new life, after a little 'tlc'. But it's good to have another, perhaps last, lingering look at some lorries which we might not otherwise see again...



**Above:** This early-1960s Foden S21 'Mickey Mouse'-cabbed eight-wheeled bulk powder tanker, apparently 187 EYK (London, 1962-3), trying to hide in the undergrowth at the end of the 1990s, was one of many ex-Blue Circle Cement vehicles which have passed through the yard, unusually keeping its tank intact.





**1:** Showing signs of the remains of its Pickfords livery, this Seddon Mk 559 tractor unit, JAR 330 (Hertfordshire, 1947), seen here in 2009, along with much later ERF and AEC vehicles, looks restorable in this picture, although it had obviously been off the road for many years.

**2:** An unusual vehicle, which looks like a Seddon Mk 7-based Lewin road sweeper, 628 FYF (London, 1963), a type we missed from our Seddon 'Road Haulage Archive' special. There is also the remains of a Dennis Pax, with 'Larry Webb' on the door, hiding under the bushes.

**3:** One of many London Brick Company vehicles which ended up in the Rush Green Yard was this AEC Mercury four-wheeler, 699 GTM (Bedfordshire, 1962), seen in 2010, sister to a couple of luckier vehicles, which appear on the rally circuit, having been restored. The AEC is sitting next to the sad remains of a Guy Warrior six-wheeler. To the rear, there is a pile of more recent steel cabs and a high-top Sherpa van, which will never see the road again.

**4:** Another glass-fibre cab still in quite good condition, considering its surroundings, on an early Scammell Handyman, 697 VNY (Glamorgan, 1963), seen in the mid to late-1990s. It can't be a Routeman Mk I, unless the eight-wheeled chassis has had the rear end cut off, as there's another vehicle across the back of it. Another it would have been good to see saved.

**5:** A Bedford S Type tipper, 843 AVP (Birmingham, 1960), seen in 2004. This was one of the later type, with the mesh-top grille, fitted with the Bedford diesel engine – for which it retains its badge. The steel tipper body had wooden 'greedy-boards' added, probably for farm use, which had prolonged its working life.

**6:** Seen in the mid to late-1990s, this bonneted Morris WE model, 876 BYY (London, 1961), had spent its working life with Post Office Telephones, whose later yellow livery it still carried when photographed. The dropside lorry was also still fitted with its lorry-loader crane.





**Left:** This Foden six-wheeled mixer, 970 AEW (Huntingdonshire, 1960), still complete with the remains of its concrete mixing equipment, including the Fordson tractor 'bonnet' over its donkey engine, behind its half-cab, seen as recently as the late 2000s, was most likely from the St Ives Sand & Gravel Company fleet. It sits 'nose to nose' with an equally sad-looking Commer Superpoise from the fleet of Henry Telfer, a London building contractor.

**Below:** With a tree growing where the engine should be, when it was photographed in the early 2000s, this Scammell Highwayman, 5873 KB (Liverpool, 1961), was once probably the pride of the ICI Runcorn depot.

**Below:** The remains of a fine old Atkinson eight-wheeled bulk tipper, 968 EDH (Walsall, 1958), of which the ribbed aluminium body has fared better than the coachbuilt cab. The operator's name, Dave Rigley & Son of Ilkeston, can still be read on the driver's door. An early Thames Trader, 42 JPI (Surrey, 1959), can be seen peeping in at the rear.



**Right:** 12 A Thornycroft Trusty eight-wheeler, 8461 UE (Warwickshire, 1960), which had obviously seen some action, before ending up in the scrapyard. Was this originally bodied as a bulk powder tanker in the Rugby Cement fleet, before fitting with the tipper body shown? It's a shame the cab was so far gone on this comparative rarity, when it was seen in 2004.







**Above:** A real 'blast from the past', BLH 21 (London, 1934), the second of the Scammell '100 Tonners', still showing its Pickford livery, was photographed at Rush Green Motors at the end of the 1960s, before its rescue for restoration.

**Right:** Another ex-Post Office Telephones vehicle, ALB 306B (London, 1964), was probably Morris-badged, one of the 550FM five-ton versions with the BMC 'Angle-planned' cab and a 'snout' to cover the forward-mounted diesel four cylinder engine.



**Below and left:** This is rather a case of 'how the mighty are fallen'. You will remember the fantastic line-up of British Road Services contract Bristol HG eight-wheeled tippers at the Bury St Edmunds sugar beet factory, which we showed in an earlier issue and our BRS book. Here is one of them, HVG 456 (Norwich, 1955), its wooden tipper body still more or less intact, in the bushes in 2007, but missing when the chassis-cab was pulled out by 2009.







**Above:** Not even this trusty old Thornycroft Amazon crane lorry, seen near the office in the late 1990s and again in 2012, was able to withstand the rigours of the weather on its wood-framed cab. The tidy-looking Seddon Atkinson 400, UBE 467T (Grimsby, 1979), on the right, was probably just passing through, on its way for export to a developing country – at least it would be nice to think it wasn't there to be scrapped...

**Below:** Another example of the effects of the passage of time, with KUD 747 (Oxfordshire, 1956), an Austin 302 chassis-cab, seen in the mid-1990s, more or less complete and possibly restorable, sitting on the platform of another vehicle, and again in 2013, minus a door, a screen, lots more paint and sitting among the wild flowers...



Obviously an ex-Hall & Co Guy Warrior six-wheeled tipper, ABY 907C (Croydon, 1965), with its original red livery showing where a subsequent operator's yellow has worn off, which is demonstrating how the cab was built with a removable top section – not quite like this, though. A Foden's S20 coachbuilt cab is collapsing next to it as well.







**Above:** Contrasting with the picture of one of the company's vans in our 'Scenes Past' feature this month, here is JXL 946 (London, 1949), a Pantechon with an Albion chassis once in the fleet, seen looking a little less smart in 2007.

**Top left:** You might say the trees are getting their own back on this Latil 'Traulier' four wheel drive tractor, which probably had a working life in timber extraction, as it keeps company with the well-known remains of the ex-North Western Atkinson single-deck bus.

**Left:** This Bedford SB/Duple Vega coach, VTW 395 (Essex, 1953), was actually one of the vehicles which Chris Salaman wrote about in his article on Gilbert's coaches of Tunbridge Wells in last month's issue...

Andy Ballisat has lots more scrapyard scenes and other pictures, which we'll use in future issues. If you can't wait, see him at a rally this season and he will gladly sell you a cd filled with pictures like this or a choice of many other transport subjects...



**Above:** One that got away. Ex-Blue Circle Foden FG cement tanker, TLD 778 (London, 1957), seen at Banbury Steam Rally in the mid-1990s, on a trailer behind an Atkinson Borderer, as it had emerged from Rush Green Motors, and again at the Gaydon Classic Commercial Show in 2005, after a complete restoration. Sadly, it is now in Australia, so we are unlikely to see it again.



# IF YOU'VE GOT A LOAD TO MOVE—GET A SCAMMELL

*This was the company slogan and shifting loads they certainly did and some still do. **Norman Chapman** has a trawl through his transport archive and takes a look back at Scammell Trailers.*

**E**ver since Scammell began to build lorries in 1920, there have been enthusiasts who have overlooked the fact that the company also made semi-trailers. To fully understand the trailer side of the business, we need to go back to 1837. George Scammell & Nephew Ltd had formed a van and coachbuilding company at Fashion Street, Spitalfields, in the East End of London.

The company's experience in the design and fabrication of bodywork gave Scammell good grounding of what would become the next stage.

The first ever Scammell lorry, shown at the 1921 Olympia Motor Show, was a two-axle tractor with a Scammell semi-trailer. Until this point, the bulk of trailers used by hauliers were of the draw-bar type. The introduction of the semi-trailer would be a concept which

would not be ignored and set the scene for future trailer design.

The Scammell 7 ½ ton articulated combination proved to be very popular and, before the company knew it, there were orders from over 150 customers. It became very clear shortly afterwards that the premises at Fashion Street could not cope with the building of so many vehicles and trailers. It was then that the new company, Scammell



**Top:** Company advertising slogan for the lorry part of the business.

**Left:** A 1920s artic, designed for distance work.



**Right:** A Scammell & Nephew brochure for lightweight bodies.

**Below:** An old trade advert for the tipping trailer manufactured in 1929.

Lorries Ltd, was formed, to be based at a new factory in Tolpits Lane, Watford.

The coachbuilding facility at Fashion Street continued to function up until the 1950s. Scammell & Nephew relocated to other premises in the London area and later became part of Carrimore Six Wheelers Ltd.

## Early designs

The first design of trailer, presented at the 1921 motor show, had a single axle and dropside body, and was closely coupled to the tractor. The design incorporated a unique automatic coupling device which made it easier for the driver to hitch the tractor to the trailer.

The tractor was fitted with two guide rails pointing at a slight downward angle. This feature compensated for the height of the trailer and raised it to the correct coupling position. The actual coupling on the tractor

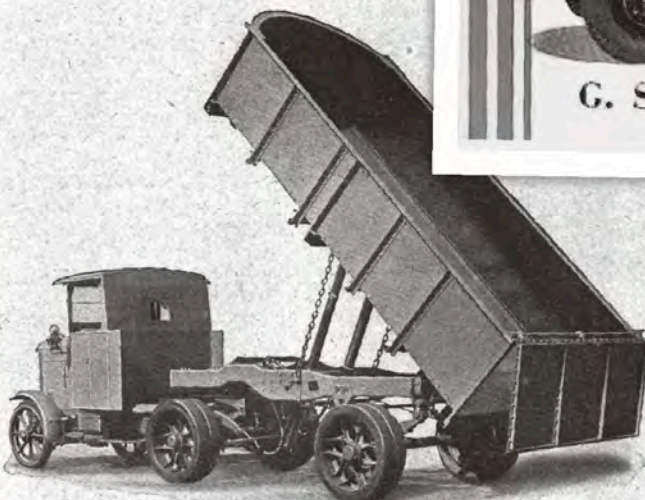
—THE—  
*Scammell*

**LIGHT ALLOY  
BODIES**



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SPITALFIELDS, LONDON, E.1

*Scammell  
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**The SCAMMELL 12-TON HYDRAULIC  
END-TIPPING WAGON**

Will turn in a 20-foot roadway and  
discharge its load in 1½ minutes.

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Glasgow:  
THE STOBROSS  
MOTOR CO., LTD.,  
79, Minerva Street,  
FINNISTON.  
No. 20,160.

was fitted with two drop-forged steel claws and a spring mechanism so that the turntable on the trailer would lock into place. As the tractor reversed onto the trailer, the landing gear was automatically raised rearward and folded into its working position.

Later versions of the coupling had modifications to automatically connect trailer brakes and lights. Another later feature was a lever located in the cab, behind the driver's seat, to uncouple the trailer. This method of hitching trailers was used well into the 1970s on trailers of 3-12 tons capacity.

For heavier applications from the start of building trailers, Scammell experimented with turntable and king pin couplings. When any trailer was ordered which was to be pulled by a non-Scammell tractor, the tractor could be fitted with the automatic coupling. On the other hand, the trailer could have a kingpin fitted, to couple to the newer fifth wheel coupling.





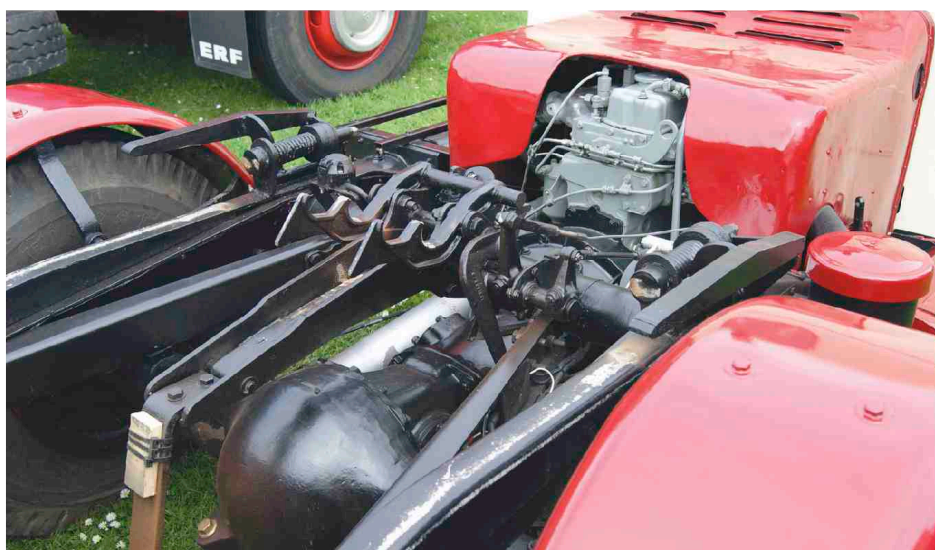
## The Fifth Wheel

Scammell did embrace the 'new-fangled' fifth wheel, as we all know today, as trailers became more involved, starting in the 1940s. Historically, the first ever fifth wheel coupling had been patented in 1911, some years before Scammell ever built their first lorry or trailer. This was in the USA and the inventor was Charles Martin, who added a simple spoked wheel to the tractor, with a fixing device. Most early tractive units had two axles with four wheels, from which the name was derived, as the coupling became the 'Fifth Wheel'.

## The Mechanical Horse

In 1933, Scammell bought a small three-wheeled tractor unit design from D Napier & Son Ltd of London. A year later, the 'Mechanical Horse' was born and the design, with multiple trailers, proved to be a huge success with British Railways (BR), for local parcel delivery in urban areas. In 1950, the famous Scammell Scarab was introduced and BR, now a loyal customer was the company which bought the most.

From the very start of trailer manufacture, large oil companies, like Shell and BP, would always specify Scammell trailers, especially



**Top:** A Mechanical Horse and trailer combination for the LNER from the 1930s.

**Middle right:** The unique Scammell coupling seen on a restored Scarab.

**Bottom right:** Trailer part of the coupling.



for road tankers. The MOD and other nations' Defence departments were also keen buyers.

## World War II and the post-war period

During World War II, Scammell was the first choice of the British Army, especially for the role of moving and ultimately recovering battle tanks. So, in keeping with the go-anywhere prime mover, an equally versatile trailer was manufactured alongside, in large numbers.

The number of operators which purchased Scammell trailers is too long to list, but here are the easily-recognised manes of just a few



**Above:** Rarely seen, trailer advertising slogan.

**Left:** A Scarab working in Bombay, India as a refuse collection vehicle.

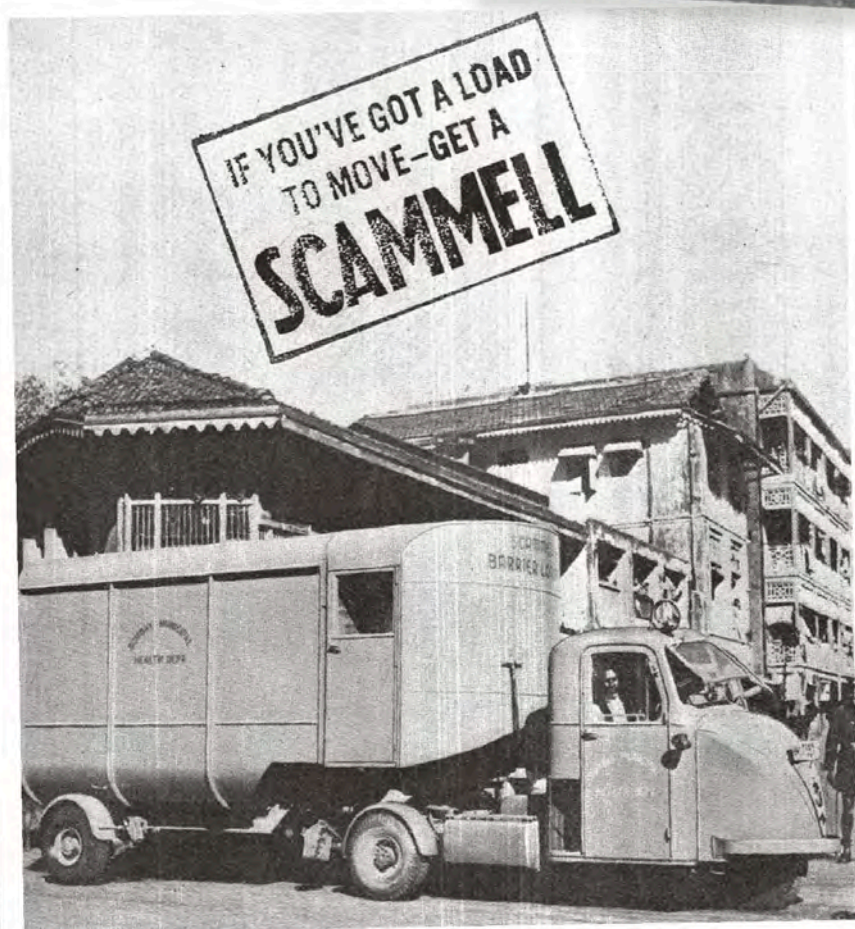
**Below:** A World War II Scammell Pioneer 30 ton tank transporter combination.

buyers; Ever Ready Batteries, Bass Charrington, Courage, Tetley's and Fremlins breweries, Hornimans Tea, the Central Electricity Generating Board (CEGB) and British Railways, plus hauliers, such as Siddle C Cook, Wynns, Turriff, Wimpey and Pickfords.

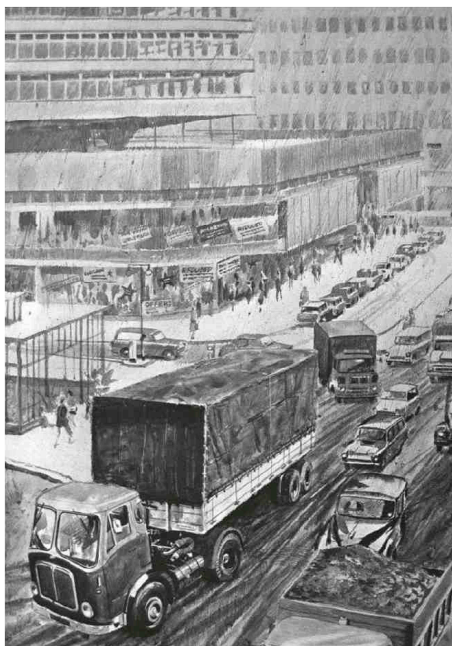
In keeping with effective advertising, the trailer side of the business came up with its own advertising slogan: IF A TRAILER'S WHAT YOU NEED - GET A SCAMMELL

While the lorries were built at the factory in Tolpits Lane, Watford, the trailers were assembled nearby, at Moor Park, Watford. This multi-faceted role of manufacture has never been equalled by any other vehicle builder, even up to the present day.

Scammell as a company went from strength to strength in the post-war 1950s. The







**Above:** A rare Scammell Trailers print showing a 'vintage roadscene'.

**Top right:** Scammell was famous for its frameless tanker trailers.

**Right:** The rear wheels on this trailer were designed to be removed for loading.



company was in a perfect position to bring out new models of not only lorries but trailers as well. Hauliers knew when they bought a Scammell they were buying a reliable vehicle which would last for years. So, as Scammell's reputation grew, a lot of haulage contractors ordered trailers and tractor units together. Meanwhile, in 1955, the company became part of the Leyland Motors group of company's.

## Collaboration with other British manufacturers

Around this time there were a few collaborations with other lorry manufacturers such as Seddon and Albion. This was where Scammell supplied the trailer, to be used exclusively with the other maker's tractor unit. Together, they would



**Above:** Displaying the fifth coupling on the early version of the Handyman.

**Left:** A page from the rare Scammell Spotters Guide booklet about the range of trailers.



A standard range Scammell single axle semi-trailer. Note the combined tubular rear axle. This is a unique Scammell feature and will enable you easily to distinguish a Scammell single axle semi-trailer.



A Scammell 12 ton capacity 'Univan' box van semi-trailer with 5th wheel coupling gear. Aluminium alloy body.



A Scammell 15 ton capacity semi-trailer with non-reactive rubber suspension bogie and 5th wheel coupling gear.



A Scammell 'Fourtrak' semi-trailer. Four wheels on two short transverse oscillating axles. Payload with automatic coupling gear 12½ tons. With 5th wheel coupling, payload 15 tons.



Why do... **SO MANY THINGS GO SCAMMELL 'ARTIC'?** CHEMICALS LIQUIDS LIQUEFIED GASES POWDERS PLASTICS FOODSTUFFS MACHINERY AND GENERAL GOODS, ETC.

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\* THAT'S WHY so many leading industrial concerns use Scammell manufacturers in this country of the completely matched design team, outfit, and that is why you should too.


WRITE FOR FULL DETAILS OF THE SCAMMELL RANGE FOR ARTICULATED FROM 3-100 TONS. SCAMMELL AUTOMATIC 1 WHEEL COUPLING.

**1**

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**SCAMMELL**  
**TRUNKER**  
**ARTICULATED TEN WHEELER**



A lightweight 6 x 4 motive unit designed for modern operational needs and the motor roads of the future. Coupled with a Scammell semi-trailer it forms a complete matched articulated 10 wheeler which whilst legally limited to 24 tons g.v.w. in this country is easily adaptable for 30 tons where circumstances permit.

The layout of the chassis incorporates the following features:—  
Engine mounted behind the cab, mid wheel base and low down.  
Forward entry cab giving excellent visibility and comfort for the driver—minimum engine noise angle space, good ventilation and heat control.  
High proportion of vehicle weight on driving bogie ensures good traction and directional stability.  
Maintenance reduced to a minimum by elimination of all pressure lubricated points with exception of propeller shafts and king pins.

**2**

**Two kinds of van for one kind of operator.**



For the discerning operator who wants the right van for the job, Scammell offers the choice.

The new Scammell Ensign and the Scammell Fleetline have very special features to suit your operation. You'll find many other benefits that you'll come to expect from Scammell.

**The Wide-Clean Ensign.**  
The G.P.R. Ensign has much more than just the wide down and hydraulic brakes of ordinary G.P.R. vans. It offers a whole lot more.  
Firstly, it gives extra volume. Secondly, it offers much more protection than previously available in a G.P.R. van. A strong steel belt around the trailer strings off shocks and scrapes without adding to overall width. Inside, an all-steel body protects the base of the panel without reducing internal width. Ensign gives a bonus of 50 cubic feet compared to some other G.P.R. vans. A special side door is added, which adds even more strength to the structure.

**The Lightweight Fleetline.**  
Fleetline is that real aluminium van that every operator has dreamed of. It's only one manufacturer has built — that's Scammell. Our aluminium van is the lightest, and most versatile van for many operations. A maximum payload, maximum volume, other minor trailer — the Scammell Fleetline.

**Our common features are uncommon on other makes.**  
Both of our vans are chassisless, so you gain cubes without sacrifice of strength. And the integral frame has a reinforced hardwood floor on one sided 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10-11-12-13-14-15-16-17-18-19-20-21-22-23-24-25-26-27-28-29-30-31-32-33-34-35-36-37-38-39-40-41-42-43-44-45-46-47-48-49-50-51-52-53-54-55-56-57-58-59-60-61-62-63-64-65-66-67-68-69-70-71-72-73-74-75-76-77-78-79-80-81-82-83-84-85-86-87-88-89-90-91-92-93-94-95-96-97-98-99-100-101-102-103-104-105-106-107-108-109-110-111-112-113-114-115-116-117-118-119-120-121-122-123-124-125-126-127-128-129-130-131-132-133-134-135-136-137-138-139-140-141-142-143-144-145-146-147-148-149-150-151-152-153-154-155-156-157-158-159-160-161-162-163-164-165-166-167-168-169-170-171-172-173-174-175-176-177-178-179-180-181-182-183-184-185-186-187-188-189-190-191-192-193-194-195-196-197-198-199-200-201-202-203-204-205-206-207-208-209-210-211-212-213-214-215-216-217-218-219-220-221-222-223-224-225-226-227-228-229-230-231-232-233-234-235-236-237-238-239-240-241-242-243-244-245-246-247-248-249-250-251-252-253-254-255-256-257-258-259-260-261-262-263-264-265-266-267-268-269-270-271-272-273-274-275-276-277-278-279-280-281-282-283-284-285-286-287-288-289-290-291-292-293-294-295-296-297-298-299-300-301-302-303-304-305-306-307-308-309-310-311-312-313-314-315-316-317-318-319-320-321-322-323-324-325-326-327-328-329-330-331-332-333-334-335-336-337-338-339-340-341-342-343-344-345-346-347-348-349-350-351-352-353-354-355-356-357-358-359-360-361-362-363-364-365-366-367-368-369-370-371-372-373-374-375-376-377-378-379-380-381-382-383-384-385-386-387-388-389-390-391-392-393-394-395-396-397-398-399-400-401-402-403-404-405-406-407-408-409-410-411-412-413-414-415-416-417-418-419-420-421-422-423-424-425-426-427-428-429-430-431-432-433-434-435-436-437-438-439-440-441-442-443-444-445-446-447-448-449-450-451-452-453-454-455-456-457-458-459-460-461-462-463-464-465-466-467-468-469-470-471-472-473-474-475-476-477-478-479-480-481-482-483-484-485-486-487-488-489-490-491-492-493-494-495-496-497-498-499-500-501-502-503-504-505-506-507-508-509-510-511-512-513-514-515-516-517-518-519-520-521-522-523-524-525-526-527-528-529-530-531-532-533-534-535-536-537-538-539-540-541-542-543-544-545-546-547-548-549-550-551-552-553-554-555-556-557-558-559-560-561-562-563-564-565-566-567-568-569-570-571-572-573-574-575-576-577-578-579-580-581-582-583-584-585-586-587-588-589-590-591-592-593-594-595-596-597-598-599-600-601-602-603-604-605-606-607-608-609-610-611-612-613-614-615-616-617-618-619-620-621-622-623-624-625-626-627-628-629-630-631-632-633-634-635-636-637-638-639-640-641-642-643-644-645-646-647-648-649-650-651-652-653-654-655-656-657-658-659-660-661-662-663-664-665-666-667-668-669-670-671-672-673-674-675-676-677-678-679-680-681-682-683-684-685-686-687-688-689-690-691-692-693-694-695-696-697-698-699-700-701-702-703-704-705-706-707-708-709-710-711-712-713-714-715-716-717-718-719-720-721-722-723-724-725-726-727-728-729-730-731-732-733-734-735-736-737-738-739-740-741-742-743-744-745-746-747-748-749-750-751-752-753-754-755-756-757-758-759-760-761-762-763-764-765-766-767-768-769-770-771-772-773-774-775-776-777-778-779-780-781-782-783-784-785-786-787-788-789-790-791-792-793-794-795-796-797-798-799-800-801-802-803-804-805-806-807-808-809-810-811-812-813-814-815-816-817-818-819-820-821-822-823-824-825-826-827-828-829-830-831-832-833-834-835-836-837-838-839-840-841-842-843-844-845-846-847-848-849-850-851-852-853-854-855-856-857-858-859-860-861-862-863-864-865-866-867-868-869-870-871-872-873-874-875-876-877-878-879-880-881-882-883-884-885-886-887-888-889-890-891-892-893-894-895-896-897-898-899-900-901-902-903-904-905-906-907-908-909-910-911-912-913-914-915-916-917-918-919-920-921-922-923-924-925-926-927-928-929-930-931-932-933-934-935-936-937-938-939-940-941-942-943-944-945-946-947-948-949-950-951-952-953-954-955-956-957-958-959-960-961-962-963-964-965-966-967-968-969-970-971-972-973-974-975-976-977-978-979-980-981-982-983-984-985-986-987-988-989-990-991-992-993-994-995-996-997-998-999-1000-1001-1002-1003-1004-1005-1006-1007-1008-1009-1010-1011-1012-1013-1014-1015-1016-1017-1018-1019-1020-1021-1022-1023-1024-1025-1026-1027-1028-1029-1030-1031-1032-1033-1034-1035-1036-1037-1038-1039-1040-1041-1042-1043-1044-1045-1046-1047-1048-1049-1050-1051-1052-1053-1054-1055-1056-1057-1058-1059-1060-1061-1062-1063-1064-1065-1066-1067-1068-1069-1070-1071-1072-1073-1074-1075-1076-1077-1078-1079-1080-1081-1082-1083-1084-1085-1086-1087-1088-1089-1090-1091-1092-1093-1094-1095-1096-1097-1098-1099-1100-1101-1102-1103-1104-1105-1106-1107-1108-1109-1110-1111-1112-1113-1114-1115-1116-1117-1118-1119-1120-1121-1122-1123-1124-1125-1126-1127-1128-1129-1130-1131-1132-1133-1134-1135-1136-1137-1138-1139-1140-1141-1142-1143-1144-1145-1146-1147-1148-1149-1150-1151-1152-1153-1154-1155-1156-1157-1158-1159-1160-1161-1162-1163-1164-1165-1166-1167-1168-1169-1170-1171-1172-1173-1174-1175-1176-1177-1178-1179-1180-1181-1182-1183-1184-1185-1186-1187-1188-1189-1190-1191-1192-1193-1194-1195-1196-1197-1198-1199-1200-1201-1202-1203-1204-1205-1206-1207-1208-1209-1210-1211-1212-1213-1214-1215-1216-1217-1218-1219-1220-1221-1222-1223-1224-1225-1226-1227-1228-1229-1230-1231-1232-1233-1234-1235-1236-1237-1238-1239-1240-1241-1242-1243-1244-1245-1246-1247-1248-1249-1250-1251-1252-1253-1254-1255-1256-1257-1258-1259-1260-1261-1262-1263-1264-1265-1266-1267-1268-1269-1270-1271-1272-1273-1274-1275-1276-1277-1278-1279-1280-1281-1282-1283-1284-1285-1286-1287-1288-1289-1290-1291-1292-1293-1294-1295-1296-1297-1298-1299-1300-1301-1302-1303-1304-1305-1306-1307-1308-1309-1310-1311-1312-1313-1314-1315-1316-1317-1318-1319-1320-1321-1322-1323-1324-1325-1326-1327-1328-1329-1330-1331-1332-1333-1334-1335-1336-1337-1338-1339-1340-1341-1342-1343-1344-1345-1346-1347-1348-1349-1350-1351-1352-1353-1354-1355-1356-1357-1358-1359-1360-1361-1362-1363-1364-1365-1366-1367-1368-1369-1370-1371-1372-1373-1374-1375-1376-1377-1378-1379-1380-1381-1382-1383-1384-1385-1386-1387-1388-1389-1390-1391-1392-1393-1394-1395-1396-1397-1398-1399-1400-1401-1402-1403-1404-1405-1406-1407-1408-1409-1410-1411-1412-1413-1414-1415-1416-1417-1418-1419-1420-1421-1422-1423-1424-1425-1426-1427-1428-1429-1430-1431-1432-1433-1434-1435-1436-1437-1438-1439-1440-1441-1442-1443-1444-1445-1446-1447-1448-1449-1450-1451-1452-1453-1454-1455-1456-1457-1458-1459-1460-1461-1462-1463-1464-1465-1466-1467-1468-1469-1470-1471-1472-1473-1474-1475-1476-1477-1478-1479-1480-1481-1482-1483-1484-1485-1486-1487-1488-1489-1490-1491-1492-1493-1494-1495-1496-1497-1498-1499-1500-1501-1502-1503-1504-1505-1506-1507-1508-1509-1510-1511-1512-1513-1514-1515-1516-1517-1518-1519-1520-1521-1522-1523-1524-1525-1526-1527-1528-1529-1530-1531-1532-1533-1534-1535-1536-1537-1538-1539-1540-1541-1542-1543-1544-1545-1546-1547-1548-1549-1550-1551-1552-1553-1554-1555-1556-1557-1558-1559-1560-1561-1562-1563-1564-1565-1566-1567-1568-1569-1570-1571-1572-1573-1574-1575-1576-1577-1578-1579-1580-1581-1582-1583-1584-1585-1586-1587-1588-1589-1590-1591-1592-1593-1594-1595-1596-1597-1598-1599-1600-1601-1602-1603-1604-1605-1606-1607-1608-1609-1610-1611-1612-1613-1614-1615-1616-1617-1618-1619-1620-1621-1622-1623-1624-1625-1626-1627-1628-1629-1630-1631-1632-1633-1634-1635-1636-1637-1638-1639-1640-1641-1642-1643-1644-1645-1646-1647-1648-1649-1650-1651-1652-1653-1654-1655-1656-1657-1658-1659-1660-1661-1662-1663-1664-1665-1666-1667-1668-1669-1670-1671-1672-1673-1674-1675-1676-1677-1678-1679-1680-1681-1682-1683-1684-1685-1686-1687-1688-1689-1690-1691-1692-1693-1694-1695-1696-1697-1698-1699-1700-1701-1702-1703-1704-1705-1706-1707-1708-1709-1710-1711-1712-1713-1714-1715-1716-1717-1718-1719-1720-1721-1722-1723-1724-1725-1726-1727-1728-1729-1730-1731-1732-1733-1734-1735-1736-1737-1738-1739-1740-1741-1742-1743-1744-1745-1746-1747-1748-1749-1750-1751-1752-1753-1754-1755-1756-1757-1758-1759-1760-1761-1762-1763-1764-1765-1766-1767-1768-1769-1770-1771-1772-1773-1774-1775-1776-1777-1778-1779-1780-1781-1782-1783-1784-1785-1786-1787-1788-1789-1790-1791-1792-1793-1794-1795-1796-1797-1798-1799-1800-1801-1802-1803-1804-1805-1806-1807-1808-1809-1810-1811-1812-1813-1814-1815-1816-1817-1818-1819-1820-1821-1822-1823-1824-1825-1826-1827-1828-1829-1830-1831-1832-1833-1834-1835-1836-1837-1838-1839-1840-1841-1842-1843-1844-1845-1846-1847-1848-1849-1850-1851-1852-1853-1854-1855-1856-1857-1858-1859-1860-1861-1862-1863-1864-1865-1866-1867-1868-1869-1870-1871-1872-1873-1874-1875-1876-1877-1878-1879-1880-1881-1882-1883-1884-1885-1886-1887-1888-1889-1890-1891-1892-1893-1894-1895-1896-1897-1898-1899-1900-1901-1902-1903-1904-1905-1906-1907-1908-1909-1910-1911-1912-1913-1914-1915-1916-1917-1918-1919-1920-1921-1922-1923-1924-1925-1926-1927-1928-1929-1930-1931-1932-1933-1934-1935-1936-1937-1938-1939-1940-1941-1942-1943-1944-1945-1946-1947-1948-1949-1950-1951-1952-1953-1954-1955-1956-1957-1958-1959-1960-1961-1962-1963-1964-1965-1966-1967-1968-1969-1970-1971-1972-1973-1974-1975-1976-1977-1978-1979-1980-1981-1982-1983-1984-1985-1986-1987-1988-1989-1990-1991-1992-1993-1994-1995-1996-1997-1998-1999-2000-2001-2002-2003-2004-2005-2006-2007-2008-2009-2010-2011-2012-2013-2014-2015-2016-2017-2018-2019-2020-2021-2022-2023-2024-2025-2026-2027-2028-2029-2030-2031-2032-2033-2034-2035-2036-2037-2038-2039-2040-2041-2042-2043-2044-2045-2046-2047-2048-2049-2050-2051-2052-2053-2054-2055-2056-2057-2058-2059-2060-2061-2062-2063-2064-2065-2066-2067-2068-2069-2070-2071-2072-2073-2074-2075-2076-2077-2078-2079-2080-2081-2082-2083-2084-2085-2086-2087-2088-2089-2090-2091-2092-2093-2094-2095-2096-2097-2098-2099-2100-2101-2102-2103-2104-2105-2106-2107-2108-2109-2110-2111-2112-2113-2114-2115-2116-2117-2118-2119-2120-2121-2122-2123-2124-2125-2126-2127-2128-2129-2130-2131-2132-2133-2134-2135-2136-2137-2138-2139-2140-2141-2142-2143-2144-2145-2146-2147-2148-2149-2150-2151-2152-2153-2154-2155-2156-2157-2158-2159-2160-2161-2162-2163-2164-2165-2166-2167-2168-2169-2170-2171-2172-2173-2174-2175-2176-2177-2178-2179-2180-2181-2182-2183-2184-2185-2186-2187-2188-2189-2190-2191-2192-2193-2194-2195-2196-2197-2198-2199-2200-2201-2202-2203-2204-2205-2206-2207-2208-2209-2210-2211-2212-2213-2214-2215-2216-2217-2218-2219-2220-2221-22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# PUBLISH - AND BE DAMNED!

Look at the shelves in any large newsagent today and they're crammed with specialist titles on just about every business, hobby or pastime you can think of. And, I suspect, some you never would.

The same is true of what were once called 'trade magazines' – these days referred to as 'business-to-business' titles. Leaving aside the internet revolution (thankfully for old-fashioned journalists like Editor Mike and yours truly, 'on-line' publishing hasn't had the impact on 'print' that was once feared), specialist trade titles have always tended to come and go, so there are plenty to collect. But 'what were they for?'

Leaving aside the daddy of them all – 'The Commercial Motor' – the big question is: "how did the others fit in to the transport industry of the time when the lorries we now see as 'classics' were on the road?" My quest here is not designed to be an exhaustive survey – think of it more as a 'snapshot'.

Firstly, while we all tend to think that 'The Commercial Motor' as the authoritative voice on all matters relating to the commercial vehicle industry, over the entire life of what might be regarded as the mechanically-powered goods carrying road vehicle, it wasn't alone. But while 'Motor Transport' was the other major UK road transport industry weekly, there was once the wide-ranging 'Modern Transport' as well, covering all road, rail, sea and air transport news.

Naturally, both The Commercial Motor and Motor Transport took a pro-road transport editorial stance, politically, with regular road tests and more in-depth technical articles – as well as news items covering legislation and inevitably (taking into account labour relations at the time), union activities. The merger of the two great publishing empires behind these titles, Temple Press and Iliffe, sadly stifled competition between them – and ultimately damaged Motor Transport – by merging. But where the two differed most was in format – 'CM' had a magazine cover (and thus, some 'retention value'), while 'MT' was a newspaper, which is why old copies are so hard to find today.

But neither of these mainstream stalwarts tended to take the views of the drivers of the actual vehicles that were being featured within

While numerous trade magazines discussed the merits of 'the hardware', it wasn't until the arrival of 'Truck & Driver' magazine that much attention was paid to 'the software' – the driver. Malcolm Bates reflects on some commercial vehicle magazines from the past and their editorial stance.



Above: The 1960s were a time of rapid change – and road transport always seemed to want 'more of it'. Or less! Both major transport weeklies – The Commercial Motor and Motor Transport – tended to take a pro-fleet operator's stance. Ironically, a reduction in demand for new cars, resulting in a need for fewer car transporter delivery drivers resulted in a strike that spread from Longbridge throughout the industry. Heavy-handed management, or over-zealous union action? You decide, but back in the 1960s the only 'colour' in this September issue of 'Motor Transport' is the spot red 'Show Review' banner on the front cover.





**Above:** While the Commercial Vehicle Exhibition at Earls Court was held on 'even' years, on 'odd' years, the trade press flocked north to the Scottish Show at Kelvin Hall. In this 1965 issue of 'The Commercial Motor', there was an added bonus for the Rootes Group (or so it seemed at the time) in that the Hillman Imp – and Commer 'Cob' van versions – were actually built in Scotland. To celebrate, Rootes took the front cover but, oddly, didn't mention the Scottish connection directly. Inside, the colour Atkinson advert featured a Cummins-powered heavy haulage tractor for Sunters, while ERF had recently sold a 6x4 tractor to help deliver new JCB excavators and Albion got a full page advert for the new Ergo-cabbed 'Reiver 19'. There were signs of nasty things to come however – 'Rootes' was already badging Commers as 'Dodge', resulting from Chrysler's stake in Britain's one-time star exporter. And even though the tilt-cab BMC 'FJ' should have been a winner, awful lack-lustre advertising must have helped ensure it wasn't.

**Right:** 2a The 'trade' publications conducted road tests of vehicles which were provided by the manufacturers. While they did comment on the steering, brakes and performance from the driver's point of view, the main thrust of the report was the economy and performance as they affected the operator. Here is a great shot of a Sentinel 7-8 ton Diesel lorry, DUJ 538 (Shropshire, 1947), when the model was introduced, being taken for a road test from Sentinel's Shrewsbury works. (CHC abe015)



their pages into account. Arguably, that did not take place until first, 'Truck' magazine and then 'Truck & Driver', arrived on the scene. Indeed, not until Truck magazine hit the newstands was there any direct criticism of the increasingly outdated and shoddy products of our commercial vehicle manufacturers, either. When it came, it was a blast of editorial fresh air, together with the start of regular large format colour photos of the vehicles in action, rather than 'posed'.

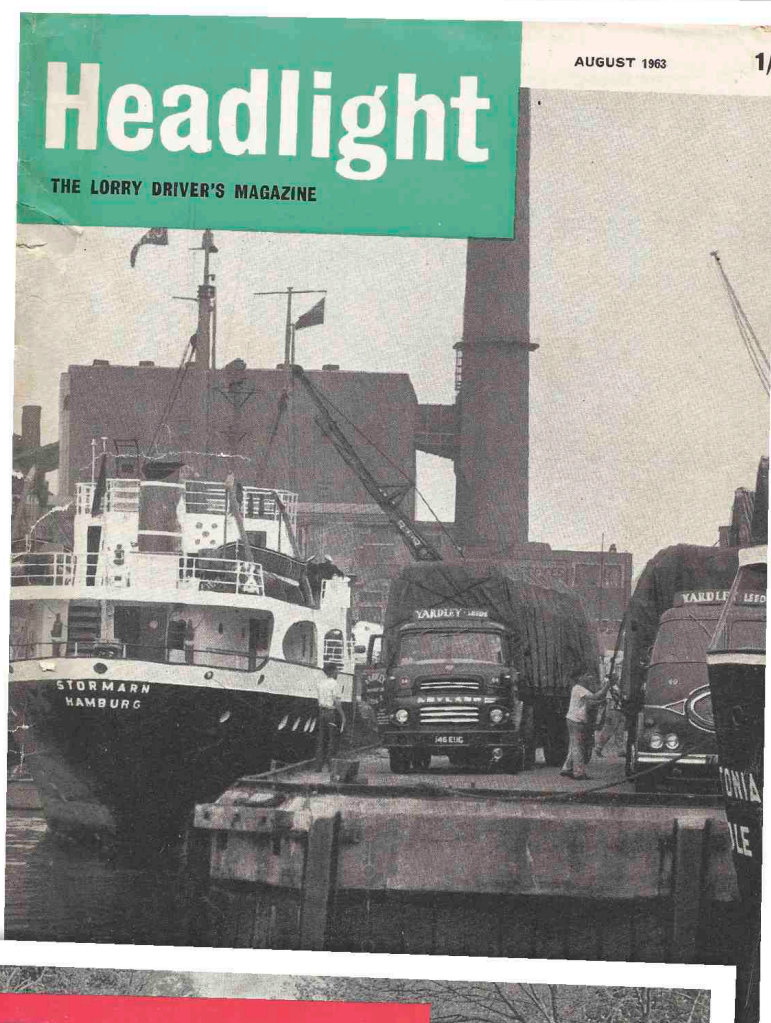
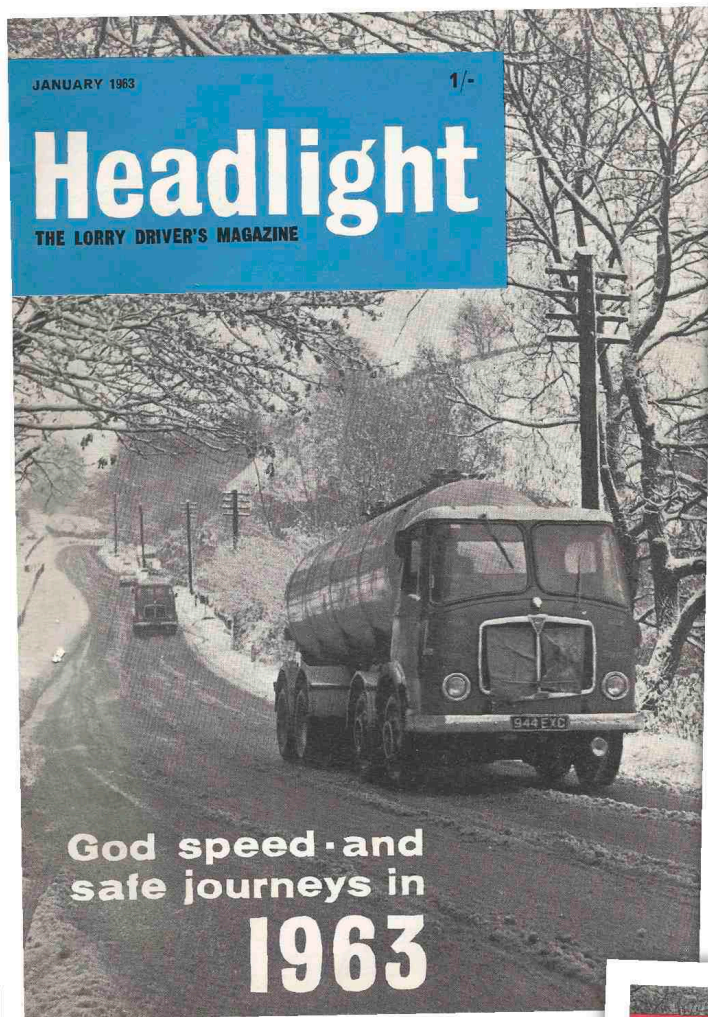
While 'Commercial Motor' (it had lost the 'The' by the time 'Truck' had arrived) had started to feature new vehicles at shows in colour, most regular articles were still in boring black and white – or rather, thanks to the cheap paper used at the time, 'grey and white'. Rather than adverts, Truck used an editorial front cover and colour printing from the first issue. But where 'Truck' (and indeed 'Truck & Driver') really scored was that the views of drivers were considered. And we have an Australian, Ian Frazer, the larger-than-life the publisher of first, 'Car' and then 'Truck' to thank for that.

### THE DRIVER'S VIEWPOINT

Hang on, you're probably thinking, was there no reading matter for the lonely lorry driver out on the road, or, in those pre-sleeper cab legislation days, stuck in some dreary 'digs'? What, aside from the 'Daily Mirror', 'Tit-Bits', or 'The Racing Post', you mean? The answer is both yes and no.

In theory, of course, any driver wishing to 'improve



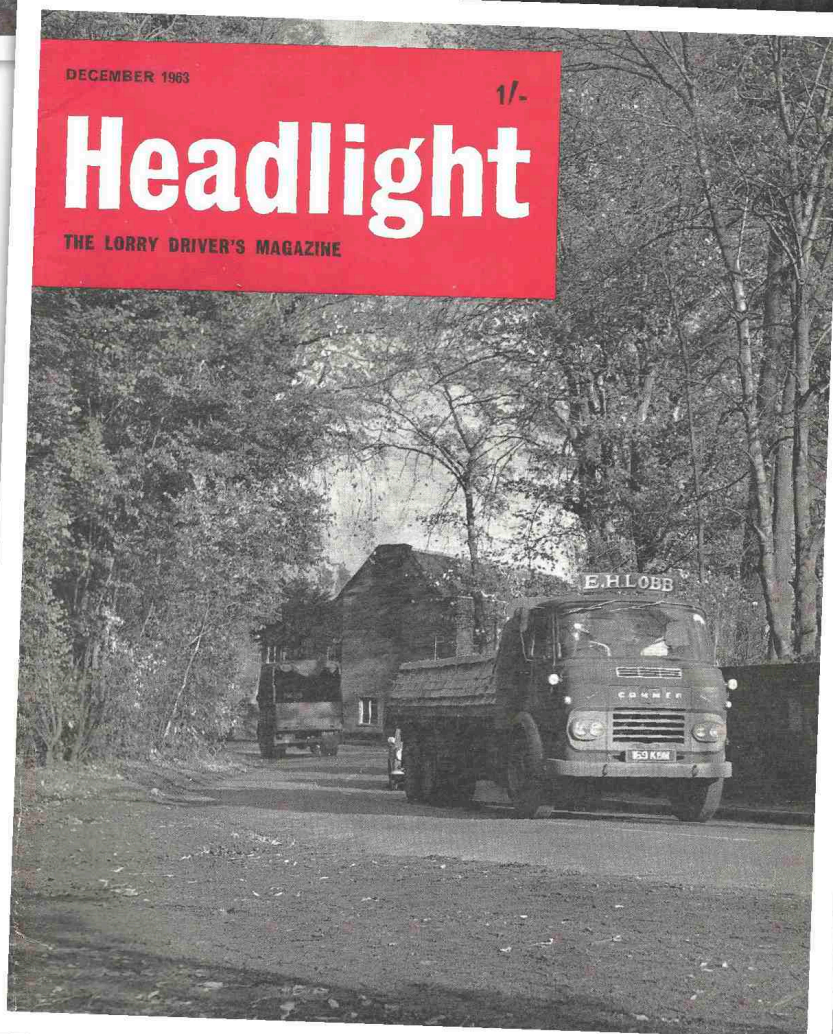


**Three covers:** One rule for the bosses, one for the workers? If that was the case, how come the original 'Headlight' magazine – dubbed 'the lorry driver's magazine' – didn't express a stronger pro-driver stance? No mention of union membership. No mention of dire working conditions, logbook abuse or the awful overnight 'digs' in those pre-sleeper cab days. The editorial tone was more about 'carrying on' and 'not rocking the boat'. Don't let these three nicely-arranged front cover photographs fool you either - there was precious little about actual lorries inside either!

In this selection from 1963, we have a winter scene, with a pair of AEC Mammoth Major milk tankers operated by CWS, leading what looks like a Renault Dauphine along an icy untreated road. Cab heaters or no, it was all in a day's work back then. Today? The Highways Agency would close things down for a week!

The August issue of Headlight features a pair of wagons operated by Yardley of Leeds - an ERF KV and a long door Leyland artic tractor unit - both featuring roped-and-sheeted loads. We're told the picture was taken in Portsmouth docks. A fair old drag from Leeds, then?

This final issue of Headlight brings the year to an end with a Commer 'Maxiload' operated by E H Lobb carrying a load for London Brick. The back pages carried 'classified ads' for what today we might see as 'iconic' transport cafes; Jack's Hill, the 'Tower Transportels', Kate's Cabin and countless others. Back then, they were seen more as 'Greasy Spoons'.





**Right:** While lorry drivers didn't get a voice until 'Truck & Driver', the vehicle operators were spoilt for choice! Here is 'The Road Way' - the official title of the Road Haulage Association. The members of the Institute of Road Transport Engineers (IRTE) also had their own specific title - 'Transport Engineer' - and there were many others. Here is the May 1950 issue of The Road Way with an advert for the new Fordson 'Thames' range, which could now be had with a diesel engine.



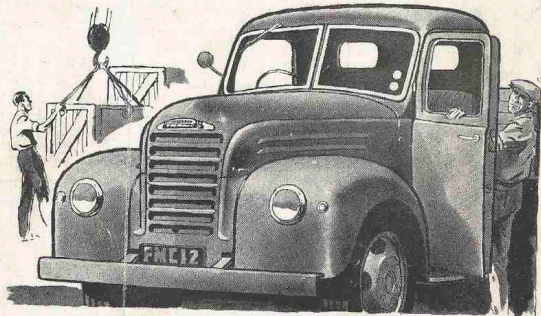
**Above:** The original Ford Motor Co demonstrator Thames ET6 is seen being tested by the press. When a vehicle was criticised by a journal in the 1980s, the company's advertising was taken away for three months...

# The ROAD WAY

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE ROAD HAULAGE ASSOCIATION LTD.  
146, NEW BOND STREET, LONDON, W.1. Telephone: MAYFAIR 9050 (10 lines)

No. 53 (New Series) May, 1950

## THE LOADS *SEEM* LIGHTER—



## THE COSTS *ARE* LIGHTER

FORDSON

Thames

TRUCKS

Always on the Job

**Y**OUR loads come easily to the powerful Fordson Thames. This robust truck was built to deal with all types of loads—and to deal with them without effort. It's an acquisition to your transport fleet; a sound investment on your books. It is backed by the countrywide Ford Service Facilities. There is a choice of body designs to meet individual needs, and there are Diesel-engined Thames for those who prefer them. Ask your local Ford Dealer for further particulars.

FORD MOTOR COMPANY LTD., DAGENHAM, ESSEX

his position' could have subscribed to The Commercial Motor or Motor Transport. But that would have made for some torn allegiances in the days prior to road transport nationalisation, for example, and perhaps again in the 1960s and early '70s, when inflation was fueling the need for regular wage increases, just to maintain the standard of living. All the 'trade' titles would be right behind the bosses and/or the vehicle manufacturers in keeping worker's wages down.

The relationship between vehicle manufacturer and customer was also sometimes an issue. Trade titles depend on advertising and 'news scoops' from vehicle manufacturers, but their 'customers' are their readers, the vehicle operators. So there were torn allegiances there, too. All of which goes some way to explaining why the editorial tone of such titles was so... Well, 'stiff' and wooden.

Would you want to cuddle-up with the latest issue of 'The Commercial Motor', in some smelly driver's 'road house', or damp, overcrowded B&B down by the docks? Even in an age before a TV in every room – or even a radio in every cab – I'm guessing the answer would be 'no'. But wait, there was a title that championed itself as 'The Lorry Driver's Magazine' - 'Headlight'.

With a banner on the 'runners & riders' page informing readers that it was 'the Independent Journal of Road Transport', you might think the editorial would be full of gritty items relating to union membership, crude uncomfortable

'wagons', poor roads and even poorer facilities for drivers. But a quick delve into the few copies, dating from the early 1960s, that I have in my archive leaves the reader feeling he is being lectured to by a school master – or even worse, a regimental sergeant major.

### WHAT, NO UNIONS?

Sure, there are adverts for transport cafes and driver's digs – including in one issue, an advert by the Rank Organisation, welcoming drivers to the new Motorway Services at Knutsford in Cheshire! – but if there is an overall editorial 'platform', it seems to be more a case of: "Don't rock the boat old boy, keep working just as you are because neither the Unions or Nationalisation is for the likes of you." As one report put it, "Better for drivers to be working for a boss who was captain of his own ship, than for the 57th mate on the Queen Elizabeth' (meaning the huge vessel that once was BRS) looks like pretty thin pro-privatisation transport propaganda to me!

Stir-in pages of boring court reports (mostly drivers being 'done' for overloading or faulty vehicles) and even a page from 'The God Squad' to ensure drivers stay on the spiritual straight and narrow and the aim of Headlight is clear – to send drivers to sleep! Perhaps the most entertaining article in all the issues in my archive is an account of 'The Great Train Robbery' (in the December 1963 issue), which suggests the need for more

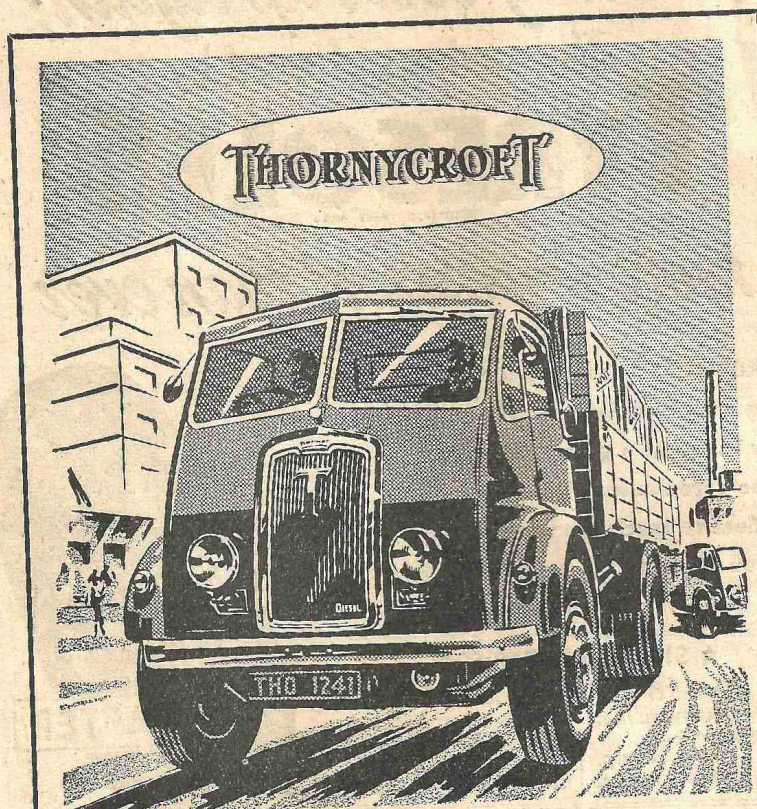
'security' as robbers might next turn to a road transport for large-scale theft – this at a time when the actual numbers of vehicle ignition keys were stamped on the outside of lock barrels, remember! Had I been driving back in the days before Harold Macmillan told us 'we'd never had it so good', I'd be looking for tips on how to nick a couple of million pounds and 'retire', myself – not a need for better lorry keys!

### VIEW FROM THE BOSS'S SIDE

The true intentions of the publisher behind 'Headlight' – 'K Publications Limited' – is as shrouded in mystery today as it was then. Was it funded by hauliers to keep 'the men' in line? Or did it, like 'The Watchtower', have some overt pastoral, or temperance agenda? One thing is for sure, it didn't address real-life driver's issues, feature photos of 'pin-ups' – or even feature any articles about wagons. Most strange.

In contrast, there are no such doubts over the loyalties of magazines like 'The Road Way', or 'Motor Commerce & Industry'. Their readership and editorial tone is clearly defined. Throughout the history of road transport, there has been conflict between operators and National governments – as well as differences between 'the bosses' and 'the workers'. Aside from pay (or lack of it), for many years, the over-riding issue was that of 'nationalisation'. Even though many bought-out private hauliers ended-up as





Introducing our new  
'TRIDENT' RANGE  
for gross loads of up  
to 12 tons.



Write for descriptive booklet 1269, to:  
TRANSPORT EQUIPMENT (THORNYCROFT) LTD.  
Thornycroft House, Smith Sq., London, S.W.1.

PROMINENT FEATURES:—

- 6-cyl. direct injection 78 b.h.p. oil engine
- Five-speed gearbox
- Easily-removable cab
- Vacuum-servo-assisted hydraulic brakes
- Hypoid rear axle
- Progressive road springs

millionaires, it was RHA policy to fight against nationalisation, just as you might expect any driver's magazine to be for it. But where 'Headlight' seems shy of even mentioning 'Unions' – let alone the desirability for drivers to sign up as members – in contrast, The Road Way is clear who it is fighting for. The fleet operator.

Articles in some of the early post-war issues are all about petty restrictions on transport operations left over from wartime – and how these were hampering Britain's economic recovery. But, as might be expected, the big story was 'nationalisation' and, in issues prior to the 1950 election, how the Conservatives would reverse recent Labour Party policy. But the real shocker? One of the reasons why drivers might be expected to be 'pro' nationalisation is that they would be treated with more respect by management. Better working conditions, welfare facilities and, indeed, even the design of the cabs on commercial vehicles like Bristols were all positive aspects that came from the creation of British Road Services, after all.

So you might expect 'the bosses' of Britain's remaining private hauliers to be keen to attract disgruntled Labour-voting lorry drivers back into the free enterprise 'family' should a Conservative administration get back into power – as it ultimately did. But no, not a bit of it; one editorial suggested: "There is no general principle of law that in every case, an employee is entitled to his remuneration during temporary absence due to sickness." In other words, let's get back to Victorian times as soon as the bosses' party gets back in, boys!

### FROM THE DEALER'S PERSPECTIVE

But we shouldn't just see the transport industry as a straight conflict between Government and vehicle operator, or fleet owner and employee – things were a bit more complex

**Above:** Inside 'The Road Way', we find an impressive selection of adverts for new lorries and vans including this dramatic rendering of the new Thornycroft 'Trident' – a 12 ton gross chassis now available with a 78hp direct injection diesel and five speed gearbox. Notice how the artist has depicted both a driver and 'mate' – even though no trailer is visible. This is a common 'mistake' found in brochures and adverts – and TV's 'Cannonball'. In real life, the driver's lot was – and still is – usually a lonely one.

**Right:** Right from the 1920s through to the late 1950s, the local independent distributor of several makes or brands was a common feature of the industry – until 'rationalisation' set in. Here 'The Capital Motor Company' informs magazine readers that it can undertake service and repair on a wide range of models as well as supplying Bedford rigs, Bedford-Scammell artics and the Scammell 'Scarab'. It seems the company also ran a Vauxhall car garage as well.

## Spare parts & Service

**BEDFORD - BEDFORD-SCAMMELL  
'SCARAB' MECHANICAL HORSE**

Modern well-equipped workshops  
Large stocks spares for all models

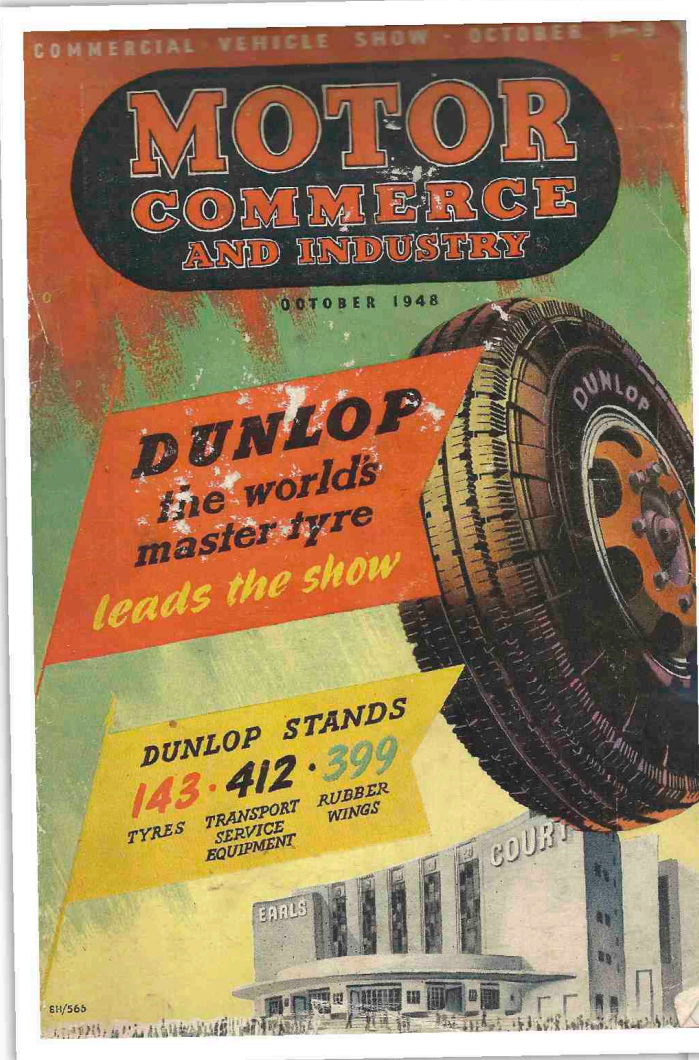
**HEAVY BREAKDOWN  
LORRIES**

★

## CAPITAL MOTOR CO., LTD.

Head Office & Works: REMINGTON ST., N.I. Phone: CLERKENWELL 7456 (5 lines)  
Vauxhall Depot & Garage: (24 hour Petrol Service) Tudor Garage, Tottenham Lane; Hornsey, Mountview 3451 (3 lines)





**Above:** Another reference to the 1948 Earls Court show, this time on the front cover of *Motor Commerce and Industry*. This pocket-sized journal was aimed at the independent automotive trader and, unusually, covered both car, light van and heavy duty commercial vehicles and, to a lesser extent, passenger carrying vehicles as well. Also unusually, the title didn't seem to be part of a larger publishing chain, either. Naturally, the interests of its readers were as much about workshop equipment and service items, so while the likes of Morris Commercial, Austin, Commer – and tipper manufacturer Edbro – took advertising space, we also find details of the latest 'lubrication bays' and fuel pumps from Pillin, Beckmeter and others, plus news that Red-eX has moved into a stylish new 'moderne' headquarters at 365 Chiswick High Road, London W4.

But *Motor Commerce* often carried information not to be found in the larger magazines – such as how to get five passengers (and driver) in a Jowett 'Bradford' utility! How? By fitting four individual 'herringbone' seats in the rear compartment. Let's see, the two-cylinder, one litre capacity Bradford engine developed 19hp at 3500rpm. That's just over 3hp per person!

than that. In the days when there was a proper British-owned vehicle industry, the 'balance of payments' (Britain's trade deficit) was always an issue worthy of a news story. 'Export or Die' might have worked for a while, in helping skilled engineers get back into a peacetime job, but the combination of nationalisation and restrictions on 'hire purchase' credit soon started to have an effect on other aspects of the trade, once the initial postwar demand for new vehicles in the home market had been filled.

As a result, the impressive lists of regional dealers and service agents, who were the readership of titles like *'Motor Commerce and Industry'*, started to lose the central planks of their business 'offer' as manufacturers like Dennis and Vulcan – which had small independent garages to provide aftersales service – either merged, specialised or, like Proctor, went out of business. There were once several such dealerships in each small, or medium-sized market town – many with a local family-owned bodybuilding shop too – all earning a living. A decade later, not only was the list of UK

manufacturers much shorter, the concept of a small family business was being squeezed out by multi-branch dealers such as Sparshatts. Bye bye many of 'the characters' in the road transport industry. And, equally, bye bye *Motor Commerce & Industry*.

### CONCLUSION

So what's my message? On *Vintage Roadscene* we pride ourselves in publishing interesting pictures of vehicles from the past. But perhaps we should all remember that behind each picture of a 'classic' lorry, or passenger vehicle, there was once not only an operator and a driver, but a whole service dealer and bodybuilding infrastructure as well. Magazines from each bygone era help us understand just how much has disappeared in the name of rationalisation.

Tragically, however, most lack first-hand accounts of what it was actually like to 'be there' at the time. The only titles I can find in my collection that talk about 'people' are a couple of books – now both out of print – *'The Long Haul'*

by Michael Seth-Smith (Hutchinson Benham), tagged as a 'social history of the commercial vehicle industry', and another, also confusingly called *'The Long Haul'*, by Bryan Holden (J A Allen, London), which relates the life of railway horse van drivers and the part they played in our vintage roadscene. And I'm sure there was another hardback title written in the 1960s by an ex-lorry driver about his life on the road (didn't it have a picture of a Scammell 'Highwayman' on the front cover?), but can I find it?

The bottom line then? We should all do everything we can to relate the personal experiences of those who 'were there', while they're still 'here', don'tcha think?

### CAN YOU HELP BRING 'THE VINTAGE ROADSCENE' BACK TO LIFE?

Were you once a driver, mechanic, dealer or operator working with buses or lorries? Or might a member of your family have a few stories to tell? Mike Forbes would love to hear from you.



# LUTON VANS 2

*Mike Forbes has selected a number of pictures from the Stilltime archive of these high capacity van-bodied vehicles, which have long been used for a number of specific transport jobs.*

**W**e previously looked at Luton vans in Vintage Roadscene issue 170, January 2014. For those with even shorter memories than me and readers who have joined us since then, I am going to repeat much of what I wrote then.

A Luton van is a vehicle on which the coachbuilt box body is extended over the driver's cab. The body style takes its name from the town in Bedfordshire and was reputedly 'invented' by a local haulier, Bertie Barrett, whose main customers were in the millinery industry which made the town famous in the early twentieth century. Hats, many of which were made of straw, were distributed in hatboxes, which were bulky, but had little weight. Mr Barrett had bodies built which extended over the cab and most of the way over the bonnet of the truck as well. The front of the 'Luton' was supported by poles, fixed to the front bumper.

There has often been some confusion between the 'Luton' van and the 'pantechnicon'. My understanding has always been that if the vehicle's standard cab, or at least a separate cab was fitted, the vehicle was a 'Luton', but if the cab was integral with the bodywork, then it would be known as a 'pantechnicon'. Although others might think otherwise, most of you who wrote after the last article agreed with me. Of course, a horse-drawn 'pantechnicon' was a particular style of large capacity trailer, with the bodywork between the large rear wheels.

Both types of vehicle have been popular with companies specialising in the transport of bulky and comparatively lightweight items, such as furniture, bedding and many other commodities involving the movement of large quantities of air or packaging. The use of a lorry with such inherently poor aerodynamics, with its negative effect on performance and fuel economy, would



**Above:** Seen from a different perspective, while up on a ramp for maintenance, here is a Luton-bodied Bedford OL, LEH 720 (Stoke-on-Trent, 1947), which was used by the City of Stoke-on-Trent Cleansing & Transport Department, along with a similarly-bodied later Bedford TA for the collection of waste paper for salvage, loaded through the side door and unloaded through the opening hatches. (CHC aak771)





**Left:** This picture appeared in the September 30, 1960 show issue of *Commercial Motor*, which we were looking through in connection with last month's article on Earls Court. The caption reads: 'The Arlington Motor Co Ltd built this 1,800 cu ft pantechicon body, based on an Albion Victor 17 ft 3 in wheelbase chassis. The bodywork is of light alloy and the vehicle is finished in light blue, with a yellow section above the front bumper, conveying a most attractive appearance', with which we must agree. (CHC aab199)

**Below:** Representing the lighter end of the scale, here we have another motor show picture from 1962, showing a Commer PB chassis-cab, with a Luton body for a London furnishing company (note the BER telephone number), built by Bluebird, better known to many for its caravans. (CHC aao083)



only be sensible if its high volume was necessary to accommodate a reasonable load.

The 'Luton' head, as it's sometimes known, is not always used to increase the load capacity, occasionally offering accommodation for a driver's sleeping compartment or equipment, rather than extra payload. Sometimes there has been some attempt at 'streamlining', more often where an integral van has been created as a stylish vehicle, often for publicity purposes, as these vehicles make an imposing sight on the road.

The vehicles pictured here were mainly built to offer the maximum cubic capacity possible for specific operations, sometimes not simply the movement of goods. Most were built on comparatively lightweight chassis as well, the smaller engines of which no doubt had to be worked hard against the wind resistance of the bodywork, rather than moving heavy payloads. Anyone who has driven a Luton-bodied vehicle, even a Transit or other lightweight, will know what a difference it makes. But if you are doing house removals, for example, you need the load space.



**Above:** Staying with unusual uses for Luton vans, these Fordson 7V vans, with full wartime headlamp masks and white bumpers, were being used as 'Display Units Organised by the Red Cross Agriculture Fund' during World War II. GGT 270 and GGW 529, both registered in government series in London in 1941, were part of an official display showing dignitaries how their donations were being used. (aal824)



**Right:** Last time, we showed a number of pictures which were taken on a visit by Commercial Motor to a Derby-based operator, Frank Porter. There were vehicles carrying this name, as well as Rileys, Brooks, Keeling and Leisure, probably the domestic appliance manufacturer and a contract customer for this removals, storage and export packing and shipping company. All the lorries were Austin FF or the later FH chassis, as here, fitted with maximum dimension Luton bodies, with drop-well, tailboard ramps and roller shutters at the rear. Here is one of the company's vehicles carrying the Brooks name, which missed out last time, on a roundabout in the centre of Derby. (CHC aas194)

**Below:** A Ford Model 'AA' from the early 1930s, VR 8067 (Manchester, around 1933), fitted with a third axle conversion and a rather large wooden panelled Luton body, seen taking part in some sort of driving test, being flagged off in front of a small crowd ahead of several cars and other vehicles, perhaps at Belle Vue? (CHC aab796)



**Above:** Another couple of pictures which tie in with last month's Earls Court feature, with Luton vans delivering to the stands at an exhibition there. At the head of the queue at the rear of the building is Bedford OL, JXR 306 (London, 1948). We can't see enough of the other vehicles to identify them or their operators, but what an atmospheric scene.

In the other shot, vehicles are lined up in separate queues at the front of the halls, being given letters to denote which door to deliver to. From the left there are a Morris-Commercial of what looks like Kayann's Furniture, a classic Jensen Lightweight, delivering to Summers Fine Furniture, behind which we can just see the nose of another Bedford, then a Fordson 7V of Sterling Furniture, a Bedford OW box van, JNU 422 (Derbyshire, 1944) in front of another Fordson 7V, RRE 799 (Staffordshire, 1948) of Vono. An Alvis saloon car has slipped in on the right. The furniture companies suggest the 'Ideal Home' exhibition, probably around the turn of the 1950s. (CHC aas375/381)





**Above:** Another 1930s view, of two Guys, fleet nos 7 and 8, DLG 771 and 772 (Cheshire, 1936), with attractive streamlined bodies, incorporating a swept-back Luton head, emphasised by the livery of Harveys Service – presumably parcels delivery – based at Sale, in Cheshire, offering daily services from Manchester. (CHC aac315)



**Left:** This is one of a series of pictures taken at the Birmingham premises of Frank Grounds Motor Services. Along with other Austin and Morris-Commercial vehicles, the Luton body on this Austin K2, GOX 900 (Birmingham, 1947) was most likely built by the company itself. Although it probably wasn't very old, it hasn't fared well and the panelling between the standard cab and the body, although basically a good idea, hasn't done a lot for its looks. (CHC aav594)



**Above:** Here's a view of the archetypal Luton van doing what we would all expect, delivering furniture. I would be very surprised if this was not a Bedford OL chassis under Barker's of Kensington's Luton van, with its attractive striped livery. Notice the Riley Monaco, Ford Pilot and Rover cars, so typical of the early post-war years. (CHC aav964)

**Below:** A Bedford TK run under contract in the livery of Birds Eye by SPD (both being part of the Unilever Group at the time) is seen outside one of the operator's depots. With the small wheels fitted to the models up to around 8½ tons gross, 101 CYU (London, 1962) is fitted with Luton-style insulated bodywork, with the refrigeration equipment most likely located above the cab. (CHC aav951)







**Above left:** Harris & Sheldon Ltd was a company specialising in shopfitting, with offices in Birmingham, London, Manchester and Glasgow. At a guess, the main branch was Birmingham, where we see a Luton (arguably a pantechnicon?) on a Morris-Commercial chassis, MVP 183 (Birmingham, early 1953). The company obviously liked its vehicles to look stylish, so there are various extra items of trim. (CHC aax732)

**Above right:** Here's another Harris & Sheldon vehicle, this time on an Austin chassis – what a lovely coach-style grille – OVP 788 (Birmingham, 1954). The different colour could be a trick of the light or the black & white film, but this also has extra chrome and trim, including that Foden FG-style bumper. The van is taking part in a Lorry Driver of the Year competition at the Massey-Ferguson factory in Coventry – notice the line-up of new 'Little Grey Fergies' in the background. (CHC aay737)



**Above:** Here's an interesting line-up, which begs some questions. The building might be the fleet's garage or a warehouse. There's a chimney to the rear, suggesting it might be attached to Vitafoam's original works at Glen Mill, Oldham. There are seven vehicles to be seen; on the left and extreme right are two Morris FFKs, Vitafoam fleet nos 66, VDK 724, and no 66, VDK 976 (both Rochdale, late 1959); second left is Morris FE, SDK 946, dating from 1957, then a Morris LD 30 cwt, fleet no 56, ODK 985, from 1955; outside the building are two earlier Morris FEs, also from 1955, with different-style Luton bodies, fleet nos 13 and 12, ODK 278 and 46. In the middle of the picture is another FFK, this time Austin-badged, 771 NTJ (Lancashire, 1960) fleet no M11 in the fleet of Noble's Transport of Manchester, based in Ashton-under-Lyne. This had a body very much like the later Vitafoam vehicles, suggesting that perhaps Noble's ran the other vehicles under contract in Vitafoam livery, or is this putting two and two together and making five. Can a reader from the area tell us more? (CHC aax188)





**Above:** Something a little different was this Luton van with integral cab – really a small pantechonicon, by my definition – based on a lengthened Commer BF chassis-scuttle, VYT 249 (London, 1959), for Heals' the well-known up-market furnishers of Tottenham Court Road. There is also a Ford Thames 4D with a Luton body in the background. (CHC aay185)



**Left:** An early Bedford TA, with side-lights on the sides of the front wings, probably a 5-tonner, MDA 231 (Wolverhampton, early 1954), with a Luton van body – not maximum capacity, as it had a fairly low overall height. The load would not have been that light and bulky, pressure cookers, made from thick aluminium, by the Midland Metal Spinning Company of Wolverhampton. (CHC aay317)



**Above:** Four Luton-bodied vehicles in liveries, no doubt blue and yellow, advertising ICI's Polycell products, Polyfilla, Polycell wallpaper paste, Polyclens brush cleaner – long-term DIY fans will need no introduction. The smart vehicles contrast with the rather scruffy yard outside the warehouse. Two Albions, most likely FT37 Chieftains, TLU 805 and SXC 476, flank a Bedford 'C' Type, ULM 605, and an Austin 502, RXX 603 – all 1956-57 London registrations, suggesting these were contract vehicles, possibly from British Road Services? (CHC aay549)



**Above:** We kicked off last time with an Austin K2 Spring Grove laundry van, and here's another, a newer Austin Loadstar, TPD 428 (Surrey, 1953). I'd say our man looks quite jolly, considering he's carrying a heavy (from personal experience!) laundry hamper; you certainly wouldn't want to put any full ones in the Luton... (CHC aay375)





**Above left:** We're back at the LDOY, with another smart Albion, NOA 285 (Birmingham 1953), a long-wheelbase Chieftain, in the fleet of Slumberland bedding. Unfortunately, with a few exceptions, it is impossible to say who built any of these lovely bodies. (CHC aay996)

**Above right:** And here's the exception to that rule, seen on the Walker stand at the 1958 Commercial Motor Show, judging from the other vehicles in the series of pictures. Apart from the badge, there are no signs that this is built on an Austin LD chassis, and a very smart job they've made of it, too. (aaz369)



**Above:** Another similar vehicle to one we saw last time, a long-wheelbase, maximum capacity Luton-bodied Thames Trader 6D, 6145 HK (Essex, 1957) in the Atlas Lighting livery of Thorn Electrical Industries Ltd, based in Edmonton, North London. (CHC abe999)

**Right:** We can't see a lot of the vehicles, both based on Fordson ET6 chassis, but with rather different capacities, but this lovely street scene tells us a lot about why companies used Luton vans, as they are outside 'Beehive - A Warehouse for the People', in Birmingham, which obviously sold furniture and other household goods, which were bulky and needed delivering, both to the shop and then to its customers. (CHC aax888)





# Coaches to rely on

## - A Timpson & Sons and the AEC Reliance

*Allan Bedford remembers travelling on the many different coaches in the Timpson fleet based on the AEC Reliance chassis.*



**Above:** New in April 1955, and withdrawn in February 1967, an AEC Reliance, PXO 973, with chassis type MU3RV, and Park Royal 'Royalist' C41C bodywork, is seen at the seaside, between a similar vehicle and a Bedford Bella Vega of an unknown operator from around 1964-5.

**W**hen I was a lad, our family relied on public transport to get around, with a few summer trips to the seaside on Sundays, plus the annual holiday, which were mainly courtesy of a Timpson Coach.

These were either AEC Regal IIIs and IVs, and later on, the early Reliances. We lived at Barnehurst in Kent, then part of the Crayford Urban District, and were able to walk to Timpson's Coach Station in Catford in about 30 minutes.

If your day trip was to Brighton, for instance, a 'feeder' coach would take you to the Catford headquarters, via every other town in between, involving about an hour's additional travel, before transferring to 'your coach'.



**Above:** Seen from the rear on the forecourt at Rushey Green, is AEC Reliance, RYO 471, with chassis type MU3RV and Weymann Fanfare C41F bodywork, new in April 1956 and withdrawn in March 1967. This shows the traditional illuminated panel, 'COASTAL EXPRESS', seen on all of Timpson's fleet, together with the fleetname in 'Roman' script.





However, if your destination happened to be Folkestone, you would be the last to board the coach, which had performed a similar detour around South-east London. This was followed by a refreshment and comfort stop at the 'Royal Oak', at Wrotham Heath, just 30 minutes after boarding.

Alexander Timpson bought his first 'Chara', a Ryknield, built in Burton-upon-Trent, in 1912. Karrier vehicles dominated the fleet in the 1920s and then AECs from 1929. Early Charabancs were silver – known as The Silver Cars – before the familiar rich cream and maroon with Roman-style lettering was adopted. In the late 1960s, for some inexplicable reason, the drab green and grey colours of the former Bourne & Balmer company of Croydon, acquired in 1953, were adopted. This changed again to a more acceptable white and purple combination, before the adoption of the National 'colours' –all-over white – under National Bus company control, along with the demise of Timpson's, when National Travel (SE) was formed in January 1974.

**Above:** A pair of the second batch of 'Fanfares' is seen on a private hire, parked next to a dual-purpose Bristol 'LS' from a Tilling fleet. VXP 505/6 were new in February 1959, and withdrawn in November 1969 and February 1970, with chassis type 2MU3RVB and Weymann Fanfare C41F bodies.



**Above:** The only Burlingham Seagulls for Timpson's spent eight years in the fleet, between February 1957 and October 1965. Here is TGJ 479, a Reliance MU3RV chassis with Seagull C41F body, showing 'Private' as the 'destination', is seen in company with a 1956 Beardmore Cab 'somewhere in London'.

## Reliances

According to the information contained in PSV Circle 'PN7' Fleet History, a total of 132 Reliances, with various chassis designations, were purchased between 1954 and 1973, including eight for the associated Bourne & Balmer Croydon fleet. These were split between six coachbuilders as follows:-

Park Royal	10*
Burlingham	8*
Weymann	14
Harrington	22
Duple	33
Plaxton	45
Total	132

\* Includes the eight in the associated Bourne & Balmer Fleet



**Above:** One of the handsome Duple Midland-bodied batch, with its blind set for return to Catford (but always shown as London), ULY 492 was new in April 1958 and withdrawn in October 1967, with chassis type MU3RV and Duple 'Donnington' C41F body. Notice how the coaches were always new in spring and withdrawn in winter, as the company's workload was seasonal...





**Above:** One of only a pair of Harrington Wayfarers in the fleet, VXP 510 was new in March 1959 and withdrawn in November 1969, with chassis type 2MU3RV and C37F Harrington Wayfarer body. The blind was again set for return to London, the coach keeping company with likes of a Vauxhall HA Viva and FB Victor, plus a Renault 4.



**Above:** 'Giving it the gun' between the traffic, at the exit from Rushey Green, bound for Portsmouth and Southsea. While next door, who remembers the 'Bettabake' bakery chain, with its doorstep deliveries, seen across East Anglia and the South-east. The AEC Reliance coach is XXT 514, new in March 1960 and withdrawn in November 1969, with chassis type 2MU3RV and Harrington Cavalier C37F bodywork.



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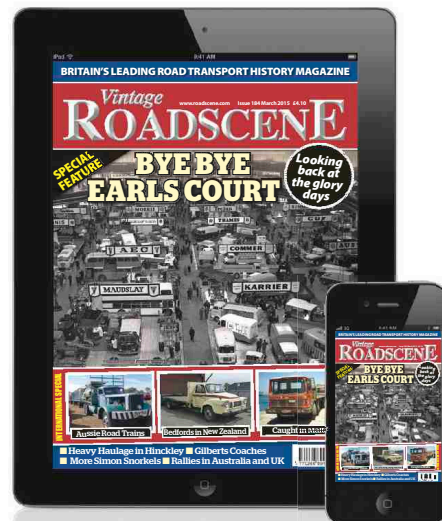
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**Above:** Seen opposite Catford Town Hall, having just left the coach station and bound for Bournemouth, with its sister 538 CYU exiting in the opposite direction, one of the first 36 ft coaches in the fleet was 539 CYU, new in June 1962, passing to National Travel in January 1974, with AEC Reliance chassis type 2U3RA and Plaxton Panorama C49F bodywork.

RT4155, passing the other way, on route 36B, has a set of plastic direction indicators at the rear, which must have been a short term trial fitting, as this type did not feature on these vehicles in later years.

**Middle left:** Seen at Five Ways, New Eltham, travelling down the A20, bound for 'Margit & Ramsgit', was one of the very attractive Duple Continentals, 543 EYL. New in March 1963 and transferred to National Travel in January 1974, this AEC Reliance had chassis type 2U3RA and C49F bodywork by Duple (Northern).

**Bottom left:** A different style of Duple (Northern) C41F bodywork was fitted to CUW 566C, new in June 1965, passing to National Travel in 1974, with chassis type 2MU4RA. On hire to Bourne and Balmer and with its blind set for the return journey, it was keeping company with one of Timpson's 1959 Weymann 'Fanfare' coaches and a Duple Britannia 'Venture of Hendon'.

**Right:** Plaxton Panorama C49F bodywork was fitted to JJJ 574D, new in April 1966, with chassis type 2URA and another transferred to National Travel at the start of 1974. The scene is Unmistakably in Brighton, with for company, a Plaxton 'VAL', a Brighton Corporation Leyland/MCW double-decker, a Zephyr 4, a Mark 1 Zodiac and a Simca 1000 (when did you last see one of those). Regrettably the Roman-style fleetname was dropped from this batch onwards.



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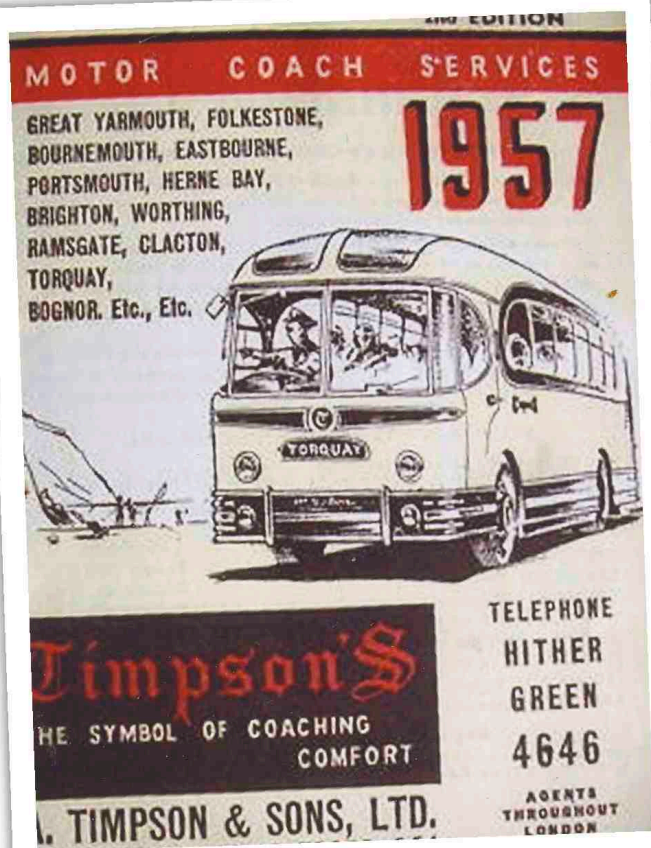
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**Above:** These pocket sized timetables and fare lists were published twice a year. The 1957 (second edition) features on its cover a Fanfare and a list of some of the destinations covered. These ranged from Great Yarmouth in the east to Paignton in the south-west.

**Right:** This advert featured in the 1966 Bexley Borough Guide, when Timpson's had added fuel oil delivery to the company's portfolio. The Harrington 'Grenadier' featured, 555 GXX, was a 1964 delivery and showed Bognor and Littlehampton on its blind.

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# FLEA MARKET FIND

**Roy Dodsworth** found an AEC roundel from a bus wheel hub, which led to some detective work with a friend.

**R**oy found an AEC roundel from a wheel hub on a table at a flea market in 2006 and thought this would be useful in his 'den' as a mat for hot drinks.

Having bought the item for £11, he was intrigued to find on the reverse a sticky label which read:-

'From the hub of FKY 24 - B.C.P.T. - From Ticker.'

Roy knew that FKY was a Bradford registration and that BCPT meant Bradford City Passenger Transport. With the help of his friend J S (Stanley) King, a well known bus enthusiast and researcher of all things BCPT, his story begins.

Fleet number 24 entered service with Bradford on 1st January 1950. It was an AEC 9612E Regent Series III, chassis number 9612E4370, fitted with AEC A208 9.6 litre six cylinder engine, pre-selector gearbox and a Weymann H30/26R all-metal body. The cost of each vehicle was £4,142-15s-0d.

The 40-strong fleet of this type were later fitted with exhaust brakes, bus no 24 in 1956, and re-seated to H31/26R.

This bus was withdrawn on 31st October 1968 and sent to Autoparts, Bingley for

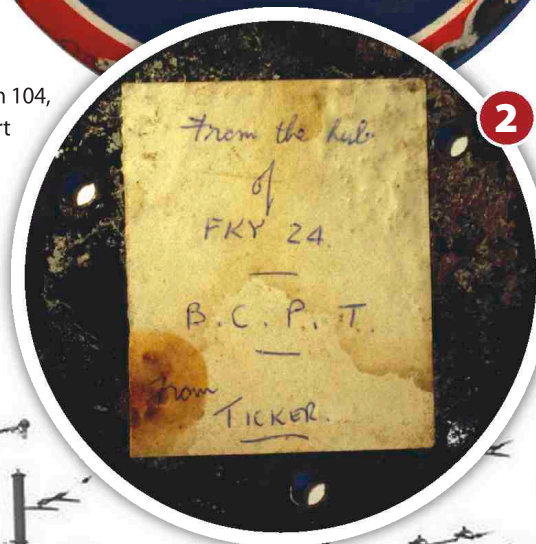
breaking up. This was probably where 'Ticker' worked.

**Pictures 1 and 2** show the AEC roundel and the label on the reverse. It is still sitting on the desk in Roy's den!

**Picture 3** was taken on 18th July 1959, near to Thornbury tram shed. Tram 104 is seen leaving the depot while bus no 24 was picking up passengers in Leeds Road. Five young spotters are seen on the footpath watching events. This picture shows the tram on a short length of track, which was used to allow this sole survivor of the Bradford tram fleet to run under its own power in the shed.

**Picture 4**, taken in 2011, shows tram 104, which is now in the Bradford Transport Museum at Ecclehill.

**Picture 5** was taken on 29th September 1962, at the bottom of Leeds Road, upon the resumption of normal running, following the temporary closure of Hall Ings and



Roy Dodsworth Collection 2011





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Bridge Street, Bradford. The Odeon cinema can be seen on the right, but this has since been demolished.

Bus no 24 is seen to the left, departing on service 90 to Stanningley. Also identified on the right is similar bus no 34, on service 52 to Tyersal. This carries an advert for Crawford's Cream Crackers, while the following bus, an ex-London RT, one of a number which joined the Bradford fleet, carries an advert for Littlewoods Pools. The other buses in this shot include an East Lancs-bodied AEC Regent III with concealed radiator.

**Picture 6** is a fine coloured photograph of bus no 24 on Service 11 to Queensbury.



5

Roy Dodsworth Collection 2011

It is on Great Horton Road, beginning the steep climb to Queensbury, which is just over 1000 feet above sea level. Seen parked in the background are two Austin A30 vans, a Volkswagen Beetle and a Hillman Minx.

**Picture 7** was taken in 1968 of a sister bus, fleet no 40, registered FKY 40, seen at an unknown bus depot with other vehicles from the Bradford fleet, including a trolleybus, to the rear. Of interest is the advert for Littlewoods Pools, showing a then world record win of £225,135, by a lucky Charles Cooper. He won it on 18th March 1964 and there is a picture on the internet, showing him smiling, while receiving his cheque from Miss World – wow!

Sadly Stanley King died a couple of years

ago. He was the author of a number of bus-related books. In particular, three books on Bradford Corporation Tramways, trolleybuses and motor buses. These were published by Venture Publications, but sadly now out of print although, when offered for sale on the internet, they command high prices between £50 and £60.



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Roy Dodsworth Collection 2011



6





## What's New

**Mike Forbes** takes a look at the new models of the type of vehicle we're interested in which are coming in the major ranges...

### Oxford Diecast

Most of the models we pictured and many of those mentioned in the last Model Roadscene in issue 182 have now been released. The latest catalogue shows these and the models scheduled for the first six months of 2015.

The 1/76 scale models are divided into separate series for different types of vehicle. The Oxford Haulage Company is the lorry series. The latest models are mostly more modern types, a white Ford Cargo box van, Royal Mail and Parcelforce DAF 85 artic box vans, an MAN L2000 curtainsider in Pollock livery, a Reids of Minishant Scania 113 and tipper trailer, an Eddie Stobart Scania crane lorry and a Scammell Highwayman and low loader in London Brick Company livery.

In the 1/76 scale Oxford Automobile Company series, the latest releases due are the Austin Seven in Fawn, Royal Blue or Maroon, The Bentley T2 saloon, Vauxhall Cresta PA in two-tone pink, the Messerschmitt three-wheeler in red or yellow – following the recently released big 1/18 scale version in red – a Mini 1275GT, and Rover 3500 P6, to be followed by an Austin A60 Cambridge, Austin 1300, Noel Edmonds Racing Ford Cortina Mk III, Ford Popular 103E, Volvo 245 Estate and Ford Zephyr Mk III.

New Oxford Fire 1/76 models are the Leyland TLM turntable escape with closed cab, Austin Tilly, Dennis F8 in silver Devon livery and Dennis RS in a yellow Maltese scheme, with a Thornycroft Nubian airport tender and Land Rover FT6 Carmichael to follow.







New vans and other models in the 1/76 Oxford Commercials series are the Austin Seven, in Primrose, AA and Liptons colours, Ford 400E in British Railways maroon and cream, several different Coca Cola schemes on the Ford Transit LWB high roof, Ford Transit Connect in Royal Mail, British Rail and British Gas colours, Land Rover Series I in Ferguson Tractors and BR colours, plus a plain Bronze Green Series II, Mercedes Met Police bomb disposal and Scottish Ambulance, Massey Ferguson 135 tractor with cab in red or yellow, an AA mobile trailer, VW 'Bay Window' van, bus and camper and Royal Mail and Post Office Telephones Commer PB vans.

Among the 1/76 Oxford Military series, the Bedford OYC tanker is new in Eastern Command 1941 livery, the OXD GS Truck in 1st Armoured Division 1941 colours and the Scammell Pioneer in the 1st Armoured Division sand scheme. To come are a Diamond T tank transporter, Bedford QLD Army Fire Service and QLB 4th Infantry 1942, plus new versions of the Scammell Pioneer Artillery Tractor, Bedford MWD, CMP LAA (including a Southdown version), military Konecranes Reach Stacker, Polish and Bomb Disposal Tillies, plus a Royal

Navy Bedford CA minibus.

The Bedford QLD in Bertram Mills Circus livery has joined the 1/76 Oxford Showtime series, along with a Showman's Trailer in the same colours. These follow a Scammell Pioneer in Whitelegg's Dodgems livery and a Billy Smart's Commer Commando bus. The Diamond T is to come in Thurston's livery, the Green Goddess in Robert Bros' and the Cargo boxvan in Harris' colours.

In the 1/76 Oxford Omnibus Company series, the latest all-new model released is the 36 ft Plaxton Panorama I in Southdown livery, to be followed by a Flights version. The Southdown Centenary Set, with the Weymann Fanfare and Leyland Royal Tiger, will be followed by the Fanfare in Triumph Coaches, Grey Cars

and Neath & Cardiff 'Brown Bombers' colours and the Royal Tiger in Lough Swilly livery. The Bedford OVB will come in MacBraynes livery, to follow the recent Bristol Tramways version. The modern Scania Irizar PB is now available in Wilfreda Beehive and Ulsterbus liveires, with a plain white version to follow. The Leyland PD2/12 double-decker is due in a few months.

Moving up a scale, there are a number of interesting new car models coming in the 1/43 Oxford Automobile Company series, an Austin-Healey 100 BN1, Aston Martin DB2 and DB9, Bentley Mk VI, Datsun 240Z, Daimler SP250 'Dart', plus new colours on the Austin Seven, Healey Tickford, Jaguar V12 coupé, Jensen Interceptor and Lotus Elan Plus Two, while the latest releases are a Stirling Moss Jaguar Mk VII and an Austin Princess hearse in black and silver. New 1/43 vans are the Austin Three-way in BR colours, Land Rover Series I in PO Telephones green and Austin Seven in LMS maroon.

New 1/148 or 'N' scale models just released or to come include an army Austin Tilly, AEC Matador and Bedford MWD, Bedford CA Wall's Ice Cream van, BOAC and RAF Commer Commando half-deck coaches, several Foden FG eight-wheelers, including a Blue Circle Cement 'tipper', AA, BR and Army Land Rovers and Transit van, Hot Dog trailer and more new colours. Then there are the new aircraft...



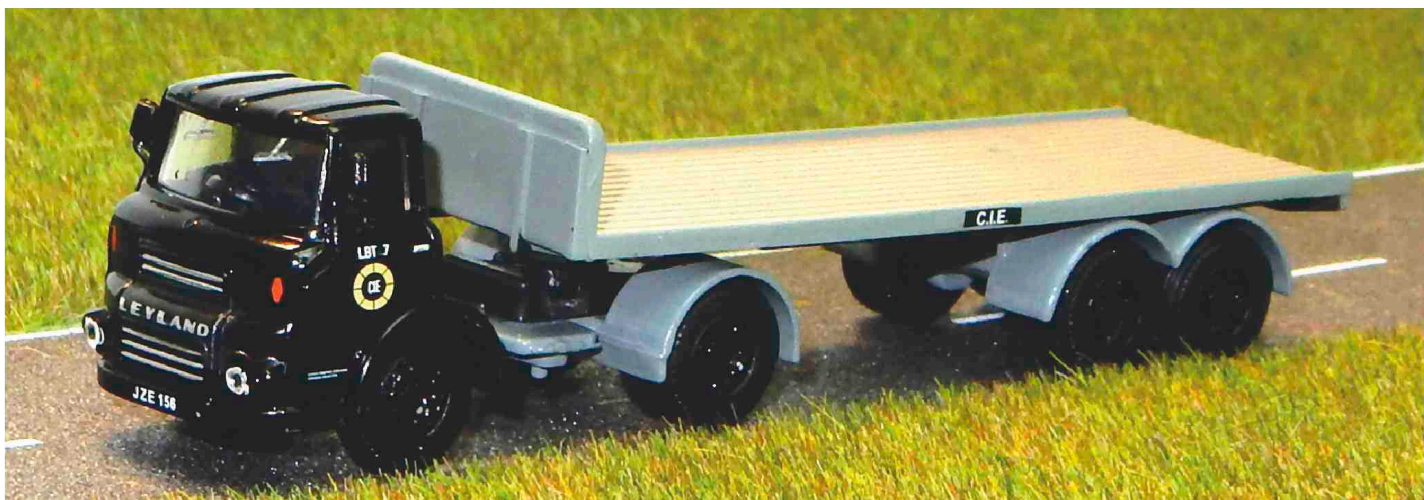


## B-T Models

The latest 1/76 scale vehicles from B-T Models include new versions of the Bristol Lodekka LD double-decker, in Eastern Counties livery, with either the long-style grille or the later standard version. These follow the first of the Bristol MW single-deckers, in Crosville or Eastern Counties liveries. These were apparently a bit 'tall', so the casting will be revised for future versions. Wilts & Dorset versions of both MW and LD are due next.

The latest 1/76 lorry models include a Leyland Comet artic in CIE colours, British Railways Karrier Bantam artic with dropside trailer, Leyland FG van in Rail Express Parcels and Fire Decontamination Unit liveries, a Thames Trader tipper in BR livery, Albion Reiver tipper in Glovers Transport livery, Ford D Series six-wheeled tipper in Hoveringham colours and a Dodge 100 Series 'Parrot-Nose' four-wheeled tipper in early Hoveringham colours, with an AEC Mammoth Major flatbed in Rosser of Pontlliw livery to come (as seen on page 65).

In the smaller 1/148 or 'N' scale, new are BR maroon and cream and Rail Express Parcels vans and a BR crew-bus on the Leyland FG, with more versions of the Park Royal-bodied Leyland Atlantean on the way.





## Exclusive First Editions

EFE is keeping up the flow of new releases, as can always be seen from the adverts on the back page of this magazine. The latest and forthcoming bus models cover a wide range of subjects, ranging from a wartime London Transport RT, Birmingham Park Royal-bodied Fleetline and Midland General Bristol VRT, to Green Line and Kelvin 'Cumbernauld's Buses' Leyland Nationals, the GM Standard-style Leyland Atlantean in Yorkshire Rider and Grey-Green liveries and a Leyland Olympian in the striking Northumbria colours. The Foden Limmer & Trinidad tipper should have appeared by the time you read this.

To come soon are the Leyland TD1 in pre-war Wilts & Dorset livery, AEC RF in Valliant/Silverline colours, a London Transport Titan, London Country Atlantean, ex-LT DMS in West Midlands livery, an East Kent NBC red Regent V, First Southern National Plaxton Paramount 3500 and a Greater Manchester Daimler Fleetline/MCW.

Looking further ahead, more interesting releases to come include one of the 1965 London Transport Atlanteans, an ex-LT DMS in Western Scottish colours, a CIE Coach Tours Plaxton Panorama and a Southdown Bristol VR II in Woolworths Silver Jubilee livery.

EFE Subscribers are also offered a Belfast Fleetline and an AEC RT3 and told about some specially commissioned models include a DMS trainer and Titan in LT Golden Jubilee 1983 livery, so it's worth signing up for this.

## Corgi

The 2015 January-June catalogue from Corgi contains disappointingly few models of classic vehicles. The new models in the Hauliers of Renown series are all 'modern trucks', while there are just two classic buses, a Hartlepool AEC Regent V/Roe and Crossley DD42 in Ashton Corporation livery.

Corgi has also been 'moving forward' with what most of us would consider fairly modern cars in the Vanguards series. There is the Triumph Stag in a new colour, white, the Lotus Esprit Series 1 and 2, BMW E30 325i saloon and coupé, Ford Capri Mk I and Mk 3, Fiesta Mk I XR2, and Granada Mk II, Vauxhall Lotus Carlton, Carlton 3000 GSi and Asta Mk 2 GTE, Volkswagen Golf Mk I and Mk2 GTI and Mini 1275GT, all of which are designed to suit fans of 1970s-90s cars.







Arguably one of the most graceful sports cars of the 1930s, the Jaguar SS100 combined good looks with 100 mph performance in 3.5 litre form. This is a 3.5 litre model, built in 1938. This is a Matchbox 'Models of Yesteryear' model.

## THE GREAT BRITISH SPORTS CAR

*Graham Dungworth offers us a history of British sports cars, illustrated with pictures of models from his collection.*

I have always been a sports car enthusiast, having owned various MGs and Triumphs over the years, so I thought it might be fun to look at some of the vehicles produced by British sports car manufacturers, using models from my collection.

Until the 1920s, the sports car was a product almost exclusively for the well-to-do; until then cars with sporting pretensions were large, powerful and expensive being largely a means of publicity through competition success. This was set to change, however, when a few far-sighted manufacturers recognised the demand for lightweight, affordable sporting vehicles.

The year 1922 saw the introduction of the Alvis 12/40 and Riley 11/40; both were sports models capable of around 70 mph, a velocity which few other cars in their price range could hope to achieve. On September 4th of that same year, 30 year old William Walmsley and 20 year old William Lyons founded a company on Bloomfield Road in Blackpool, called the Swallow Sidecar Company making, as the name suggests, motorcycle sidecars. By 1927, the company name had been changed to the Swallow Coachbuilding Company, producing bodies on Austin 7, Standard, Swift and Wolseley

chassis. The following year saw a move to Holbrook Lane in Coventry and the legend that was to become Jaguar was born.

In 1936, the Jaguar SS100 was unveiled to the public. Although still an expensive proposition, it combined speed, beauty and tremendous value for money for those lucky enough to afford one. The SS100 remains an iconic image to this day, even though only 198 of the 2.5 litre and 116 of the 3.5 litre versions were built between 1936 and 1940. Of this total, a mere 49 cars were exported but, as we will see, exports were destined to play a major part in the development of the British sports car.

In March 1928, The MG Car Company was registered as a separate entity from its proprietor's Morris Garages, although the first car to bear the name MG was the MG Super Sports of 1924, based on the Morris Oxford 14/28. Thanks to the success of the MG marque, notably the £175 Morris Minor based M-type Midget, MG was in need of a new home. An empty factory was found in Abingdon, about 7 miles from Oxford, MG moved there in September 1929 and this would remain the company's home until 1980.

The J2 Midget replaced the popular M-type

in August 1932, and 2,083 examples had been built by 1934, when the J2 was in turn replaced by the roomier P-type. March 1936 saw the introduction of the TA Midget, followed in 1939 by the TB, upon which the outbreak of war would halt production until 1945.

The export market had never played an important part in the affairs of MG in the years leading up to World War II, but American ex-servicemen, particularly members of the US 8th Air Force, had taken a liking to the little British two-seaters and started to take examples back to the USA, when they returned home after the war. The model they took home was the MG TC, which had been launched in September 1945.

The American people saw them, loved them and wanted them, which resulted in 65 per cent of total MG TC production being exported, the majority going to America. The TD and TF models proved just as popular. In the four years from 1949 to 1953, 30,000 TDs were sold, 23,488 going to the USA. In Britain, a country almost bankrupted by a world war and with the Labour Government of the day urging British industry to 'export or die' this was success on a grand scale.

Export success was not, however, confined to MG in the immediate post war years, Jaguar





The car that America fell in love with in the 1940s. The MG TC felt faster than it actually was, handled well and above all offered lots of fun for the driver. This is a (rather expensive) model by Vitesse.



The Jaguar XK120 of 1948 was the first of a series of elegant, seriously-fast sports cars, which would include the 1954 XK140, the 1957 XK150 and the 135 mph triple-carburettor 3.8 litre XK150S. A Lledo Vanguard XK120 is shown.

had a new 3.4 litre six cylinder twin cam engine, intended for use in a large saloon car. Originally designed as a test chassis for this engine, the Jaguar XK120 caused a sensation when chassis No 670001 was exhibited at the 1948 London Motor Show.

Jaguar had always appealed to a different type of customer, when compared with the cheaper, more Spartan MGs. America nevertheless took to the combination of elegance and 120 mph performance offered by the XK120, in fact the first production roadster, chassis No 670003, was delivered to the American actor Clark Gable.

The success of MG and Jaguar had not gone unnoticed by other British manufacturers, several tried, but most failed to break into the lucrative export market themselves. Aston Martin with the DB1, Alvis with the TB14 and even Austin with the ill-fated A90 Atlantic all offered the wrong vehicle at the wrong time. However the Austin's engine would find fame elsewhere as we will see.

Triumph did achieve modest export success with the 1946 1.8 litre roadster, later upgraded

by fitting the 2.0 litre engine from the Standard Vanguard, and probably best remembered as the car driven by the actor John Nettles in the BBC detective series 'Bergerac'. In America the Triumph name was now known and, with the introduction of the 2 litre TR2 at the Geneva Motor Show in March 1953, Triumph had at last got a product with which they could take the fight to MG.

In the late 1940s and early '50s, with the emphasis still firmly on the export drive, the would-be British customer was struggling to buy any new car, much less a sporting model but, by the mid-1950s, the situation was beginning to ease somewhat. In 1952, MG became part of the British Motor Corporation and a new sports car appeared at the London Motor Show.

Built by the Donald Healey Motor Company and using the 2.6 litre engine from the Austin Atlantic, it was called the Healey 100. BMC recognised a winning formula when they saw it and by 1953 the car went on sale as the Austin-Healey 100. The 'Big Healey' went on to enjoy a 14 year production run, during which it became

gradually more refined, while the 100M and 100S higher performance versions were also made available.

It was in 1959, however, that the car gained a 3 litre, six cylinder engine and was transformed into the Austin-Healey 3000. Though always imagined as a muscular sports car on the uncrowded British roads of the late 1950s, it is nevertheless a fact that over 90 per cent of those built were exported to the USA.

MG and Austin-Healey now found themselves rivals within BMC, with MG still producing the TF, unveiled in September 1953, with a slightly lower bonnet line, the radiator grille sloping backwards, and faired-in headlights, but still looking like a 1930s design. The TF lasted until September 1955, when MG launched its new secret weapon, design code EX182, better known as the MGA. The design unashamedly drew cues from Jaguar's XK120 roadster and, with around 95mph available from the 1.5 litre engine, plus excellent handling, it is no surprise that it was a huge hit with sports car enthusiasts, small boys and toy manufacturers alike. A



In 1964, the Austin-Healey 3000 Mk III, with a top speed of 125 mph, was advertised by BMC as 'the fastest sports car you can own for less than £1500'. How times have changed! The car pictured is a 1959 Mk I by Corgi.



Showing to good advantage the knock-off centre-lock Dunlop wheels, fitted to the MGA Twin Cam is RFY 96 chassis no YD1/2119 engine no 16GBU1780, seen on an idyllic summer evening in an English village. This is an old whitmetal kit by Ace Car Kits.



hardtop version was announced in 1957, a 1.6 litre engine became available in May 1959, but possibly the most sought after version was the 108 bhp, 110 mph Twin Cam of 1958 of which only 2,111 examples were built.

By the mid-1950s America was taking the vast majority of cars produced by all the British sports car manufacturers and American influence was beginning to show in the design and specification of the cars on offer. Although in America it was fashionable to be seen driving an MGA or Austin-Healey 100, it was also embarrassing to be out-accelerated by a Chevrolet Bel Air or Hudson Hornet. The influential American motor magazine *Motor Trend* pointed out to the makers of British sports cars that performance, and in particular acceleration, was what the average American buyer wanted and as a result British sports cars became better equipped, faster and therefore ever more expensive.

It was BMC who spotted a sales opportunity at the bottom end of the market. At £445, the Mk I Austin-Healey Sprite, introduced in May 1958, represented a return to the cheap motoring fun offered by the MG TC in the 1940s. Based on components from BMC's own Morris Minor and Austin A35 saloons and powered by a 948 cc BMC A-series engine, performance was to say the least modest, giving rise to a profitable market in add-on tuning accessories. The one-piece forward-hinged bonnet and front wings made for excellent engine accessibility, but there was no external access to the boot, the interior of which could only be reached by folding the seat backs down. As the hood and sidescreens lived in the boot a sudden shower of rain could provide endless fun!

The headlamp design immediately gave rise to the nickname 'Frogeye', but the cheeky design provided just the boost that the British home



The Austin-Healey Sprite Mk1, known better as the 'Frogeye', would mark a return to inexpensive motoring fun. USL 369 is a 1958 example. The model is another old white metal kit, by SMTS.

market needed. Even though, in theory, MG and Austin-Healey were rivals within BMC, all Austin-Healeys had been built at MG's Abingdon factory from the outset. MG must have looked with envious eyes at the success of the little Healey Sprite, because in June 1961 the 'Frogeye' was replaced by the Mk II Sprite which had a standard bonnet arrangement and external access to the boot.

At exactly the same time, MG launched a new sports car, reviving the 1920s 'Midget' model name. In a blatant example of 'badge engineering', the Sprite and Midget were basically identical and collectively became known as the 'Spridget'. Engines were uprated to 1,098 cc in 1963 and they would later share the same 1,275 cc engine found in the Mini Cooper S. Though the Sprite/Midget line had been started back in 1958 by the original 'Frogeye', the Austin-Healey Sprite quietly disappeared in 1969.

Triumph had gained a foothold in the American market with the 2 litre TR2 of 1953, which was replaced by the TR3 in 1956. The following year, the TR3A was announced, the first sports car from a major manufacturer to have disc brakes as standard. Altogether, Triumph built over 71,000 TR3s and 3As, of which a mere 5,500 were sold in Britain, but the company was poised to take on MG and Austin-

Healey with a small sports car of its own, the Triumph Spitfire.

With the dawn of the 'Swinging 60s', the British sports car bandwagon was rolling faster than ever and more British manufacturers were trying to jump on board. In 1959, the Rootes Group had entered the arena with a pretty little car re-introducing the model name 'Alpine', first used in 1953 on a big, rather heavy but powerful two-seater. The new Sunbeam Alpine was intended to rival the Triumph TR3A and MGA, it had wind-up windows, proper weather protection and, with a nod to American styling trends, the rear wings incorporated sharp tail fins.

Restrained tail fins were also featured on the Michelotti-designed Triumph TR4 which replaced the TR3A in 1961. The TR4 and its successor, the TR4A with independent rear suspension, soon had a serious rival in the MGB, which replaced the MGA in 1962. Looking like a big brother to the MG Midget, the MGB would eventually out-sell all its rivals. 1965 saw the release of the MGB GT, a fixed-roof hatchback, with two optimistically named 'occasional' rear seats, which further increased the car's appeal on both sides of the Atlantic.

American influence on British sports car design was now stronger than ever, Sprites and Midgets gained wind-up windows in 1964 and 1,275 cc engines two years later, but the Triumph Spitfire

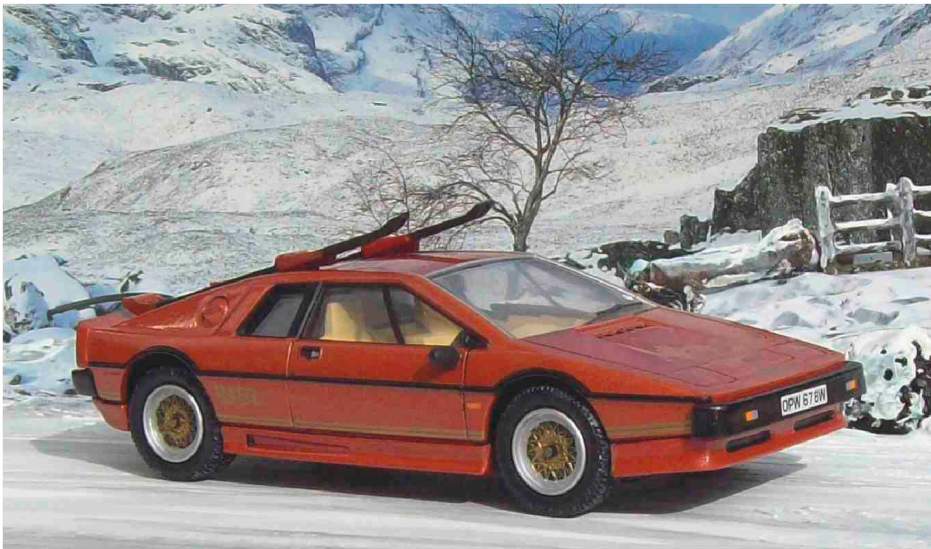


The Triumph TR3A of 1957 was the first mass-produced British sports car to be offered with disc brakes. The *Autocar* magazine called it 'exciting...fast, flexible and with first class brakes'. The model is a Corgi.



E-Type Jaguar, chassis no 861301, was built on the 8th October 1963 and was originally opalescent silver blue with a dark blue interior. Sold in London with the registration GS 55, and later re-registered 410 PE it was finally given the age-related mark YKE 374A. Now re-finished in red it is the property of the Jaguar Daimler Heritage Trust. This model comes from Atlas Editions.





1981 Lotus Esprit Turbo, OPW 678W, was the car driven by Roger Moore as James Bond in the film *For Your Eyes Only*. The first Esprit Turbo produced by Lotus, it was Lotus founder Colin Chapman's own car. Originally finished in white, it was sent back to Lotus to be re-sprayed metallic bronze in order to stand out against the film's snow scenes. This is a Corgi model.

would beat them both in the battle for sales. Sunbeam gave the Alpine a bigger engine after only one year of production, and again in 1965, to make 100 mph a realistic proposition.

Multi-cylinder engines were now the order of the day, Triumph inserted its 2 litre six cylinder engine into the Spitfire, gave it a fastback body similar to the MGB and released it as the GT6. The TR5 also received six cylinders, as did a derivative of the MGB designated the MGC. Introduced at the 1967 Motor Show, the big engine made the handling somewhat unpredictable and the MGC was discontinued in 1969.

The 3.5 litre Rover engine would later find its way into the engine bay of the MGB, in the form of the 1973 MGB GT V8, which was a very well balanced 125 mph machine, unfortunately killed off by the oil crisis of the same year. Another V8-engined sports car was offered by Daimler in the early 1960s, in the 2.5 litre glass-fibre bodied SP250. Originally to be called the Daimler Dart, until Dodge pointed out that it had first call on the 'Dart' model name, the car had pronounced tail fins, a poor gearbox and a tendency for its doors to fly open, when cornered at speed. Daimler had become part of the Jaguar empire in May 1960 and the one thing Jaguar didn't need was in-house competition in the sports car field, especially as it had its own world-beater waiting in the wings.

The Jaguar E-Type was quite simply a beautiful car, with performance to match. Customers were more than willing to overlook the poor brakes and cramped cockpit of the early cars, details which would soon be rectified in later models. In 1966 Jaguar brought out the E-Type 2+2, a longer wheelbase version of the roadster, offering fastback styling coupled with rear seats suitable for two children or one

uncomfortable adult.

Called the XK-E in America, the E-Type would become as much of a 1960s icon as a certain long-haired group from Liverpool. Later E-Type models, including the V12, were still fabulous cars, but to many eyes the original roadster is still the most elegant. The XJS which succeeded the E-Type was a large opulent vehicle, a far cry from the simplicity of a Sprite or Midget.

By the mid-1960s, the British sports car industry was still looking to America to take the vast majority of its output, but the writing was already on the wall for various reasons. In April 1964, the American public embarked on a new automotive love affair, with a car based on the humble Ford Falcon saloon car and named after the World War II fighter aircraft, the P51 Mustang. The first 18 months of production saw the Ford Mustang sell over a million examples and gave rise to the term 'Pony Car'. The Chevrolet Camaro, Pontiac Firebird and Chrysler's Plymouth Barracuda would soon follow the Mustang's lead, in short America now wanted a different breed of performance car and this time it was home-grown.

Secondly, Ralph Nader's book 'Unsafe at Any Speed', published in 1965, resulted in new Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards to which all cars sold in the USA had to conform, including imports. In some cases the modifications needed to meet the emission and safety standards were just too expensive, as in the case of the Sunbeam Alpine, which was discontinued. The MGB and Midget sprouted ugly energy-absorbing polyurethane bumpers and the poor MGB had to have the ride height increased by 1.5 inches, in order to meet the regulation height of the headlamps

above ground level, which did nothing to improve the handling!

Add to this a round of takeovers and mergers in the British motor industry when, for example, BMC acquired Jaguar and became British Motor Holdings, which then merged with the Leyland Motor Corporation, which already owned Triumph and Rover, to become the British Leyland Motor Corporation. The oil crisis triggered the collapse of British Leyland in 1974, leading to nationalisation in 1975, under the name Leyland Cars and subsequently BL Cars. Could any industry survive this degree of uncertainty?

In this relatively short article, it is impossible to mention all the builders of fabulous British sports cars, including names like TVR, Aston Martin and Singer. Many famous names are now under foreign ownership, like MG, owned by the Chinese Nanjing Automobile, and Lotus, the majority share in the company having been sold to Proton in 1996. We have seen how the lure of the American dollar helped to make, and ultimately had a hand in breaking, the British sports car industry, but there is one manufacturer still in private hands and still making brilliant sports cars that we must look at before we close.

The company was founded by Henry Frederick Stanley Morgan and brings us full circle to traditional open two-seater British sports cars, with separate running boards, hoods and sidescreens, hand-built to order and with a long waiting list for the company's products. Is there something in every sports car enthusiast that yearns for this type of simple, wind in the hair motoring? Long live Morgan!

● *Graham has cleverly positioned his models against an interesting backdrop, with some figures and other scenic accessories, to produce some realistic scenes, featuring the cars he has been writing about...*

**All the models shown have been super-detailed, each taking around 10 hours and based on reference photographs of the actual car.**



Introduced in 1968, the Morgan Plus 8 was for several years in the 1960s the fastest-accelerating UK production car. With the Rover 3.5 litre V8 engine, it was more than capable of burning rubber! J220 BNP is an example from 1991. This one is a model I found in an antique shop, which has no manufacturer's name on the base, a shame, as it's such a good model.



# More Aussie Rally

There were just so many pictures of interesting vehicles from the Australian rally sent by **Graeme Oliver** that we had to use some more...



**Above and right:** A well-restored Volvo F86 eight-wheeler, fitted with the 'Trilux' wheels favoured on many of the vehicles seen here and a hefty lorry-loading crane, carries an Albion Clydesdale, which had a third axle added during its career in West Wyanlong Shire, working as a bin truck until 2004. It was awaiting a new body when this picture was taken.

**G**raeme sent some pictures of a vehicle rally at Cleveland, an outer suburb of Brisbane in the state of Queensland, Australia, which show both similarities and differences, when compared with similar events in Britain.

There are plenty of British-built lorries to be seen, as well as some American and European vehicles, while the Aussies certainly seem to like their old vehicles, with plenty of people looking at the wide range on display.

The pictures were taken a few years back, in May 2007. This might have been the equivalent of our November, so the sunshine makes you a little bit jealous, but let's enjoy these pictures of some great restorations.





A classic Mack AC 'Bulldog' lorry and a crawler tractor sit on a fancy-looking low-loader trailer.



**Above:** We showed a late-style Commer QX with a cattle body last time. This one has a tipper body and is fitted with a sun-visor – perhaps needed a lot more in the Australian climate than in the UK.



**Above:** A smart Mack B61 from the 1960s, fitted with a tipper body, takes part in the parade.



**Above:** Another type of American vehicle not often seen in the UK or Europe, a White, very American-looking with its Trilux wheels and marker lamps.



**Above:** One of two pre-war Fords in this owner's 'Mac's Towing' livery, this one fitted with twin-boom recovery equipment. It was followed around the ring by a Holden 'Ute' from the 1950s, just to complete the Aussie scene.





**Above:** A great-looking REO in the line-up – not sure whether that's the front part of a low-loader on the fifth wheel...

**Right:** I think the number plate gives us a clue to the age of this Traffic, probably a 2-tonner with a Continental engine, made in St Louis, Missouri, by the Traffic Motor Truck Corporation, in business until 1929,



**Above:** Canadian-built Fords like this one appeared on British roads during the early post-war years, but I can't think of one that has been restored here, like this stake-bodied truck.



**Above:** Albion built some fine bonneted lorries like this one, for export during the early post-war years.





**Left:** A very 'perpendicular' Leyland Beaver, in need of some attention, but what an imposing vehicle it will make...

**Below left:** A very nicely restored Scammell Routeman Mk II from 1968, belonging to G & J Kircher of Brisbane, which could almost be at a UK rally...

**Below right:** Not so this other vehicle in the Kircher stable, a 1930s Chevrolet, with an open wooden cab and spoked artillery wheels.



**Above:** There were some passenger vehicles at the rally as well, which reflected the mix of European – mainly British – and American vehicles among the commercials. This 1956 Fxible Clipper – actually built under licence in Melbourne by Ansair – represents the 'Yanks', while the Leyland Panther in the background is typical of the 'Brits' among the Australian passenger vehicles of years gone by. All in all, this was a great rally, and these pictures just make you want to see more, but it's a long way to go...



# Rally Diary

*A selection of events being held during the coming month which will be of interest to Vintage Roadscene readers.*

It seems that events have carried on over the winter months, with enthusiasts braving the cold to bring out their vehicles, but the season really gets going over the Easter period, so here is the first of our 2015 Rally Diaries covering the weekends between the publication dates of this and the next issue.

If you're organising an event which would

be of interest to Vintage Roadscene readers, please let us know the details for future diary pages.

Let us hope the weather is kind and everyone enjoys their days out, wherever they go. Don't forget to take your camera and if you see anything interesting, send us a picture for our future Rally Scene pages...

## MARCH

**22 March – Garstang Autojumble**, Hamilton House Farm, A586, off A6, Garstang, Preston, Lancs PR3 0TB, 07836 331324  
e-mail: info@garstangautojumbles.co.uk  
www.garstangautojumbles.co.uk

**28 March – Lincoln Autojumble**, Former RAF Base, Hemswell, Lincolnshire DN21 5TJ, 07816 291544  
e-mail: lincolnautojumble@hotmail.co.uk  
www.lincolnautojumble.com

**28 March – Heritage Transport Show & South East Bus Festival**, Kent Showground, Detling, near Maidstone ME14 3JF, 01622 633054  
e-mail: ellie@kenteventcentre.co.uk

**28-29 March – Spring Transport Festival**, Museum of Transport, Boyle Street, Cheetham, Manchester M8 8UW, 0161 205 2122  
www.gmts.co.uk

**29 March – Open Day**, Whitewebbs Museum of Transport, Whitewebbs Road, Enfield, Middlesex EN2 9HW, 0208 367 1898  
e-mail: whitewebbsmuseum@aol.com  
www.whitewebbsmuseum.co.uk

## APRIL

**3-6 April – Easter Vintage Festival**, Great Central Railway, Quorn Station, Forest Road, Quorn, Leics LE12 8AG, 01509 8632323  
E-mail: michael.stokes@gcrailway.co.uk  
www.gcrailway.co.uk

**4 April – South Midlands Autojumble**, Ross-on-Wye Livestock Centre, Ross-on-Wye, Herefordshire HR9 7QQ, 01989 750731  
e-mail: johnharding197@live.co.uk

**4-5 April – Start of Season Easter Gala**, East Anglia Transport Museum, Chapel Road, Carlton Colville, near Lowestoft, Suffolk NR33 8BL, 01502 518459  
e-mail: eastangliatransportmuseum@live.co.uk  
www.eatm.org.uk

**4-5 April – St Dennis Steam & Vintage Rally**, St Dennis, between Newquay and St Austell, Cornwall  
e-mail: lobb81@googlemail.com

**4-5 April – Kirkby Stephen & Brough Classic Commercial Vehicle Rally**, Kirkby Stephen and Brough, Cumbria CA17 4QT, 01539 623254  
e-mail: ecvg@cumbriaclassiccoaches.co.uk  
www.cumbriaclassiccoaches.co.uk/ecvg.shtm

**4-5 April – A Pageant of Transport**, The Beach Lawns, Weston-Super-Mare, Somerset, 01934 627563

**4-6 April – Easter Weekend Trolleydays**, The Trolleybus Museum, Belton Road, Sandtoft DN8 5SX, 01724 711391  
e-mail: trolleybusmuseum@sandtoft.org  
www.sandtoft.org

**5 April – National Vintage Tractor Road Run 2015**, Garden House, Gretna, Dumfries DG16 5EP, 01576 202505  
e-mail: nvtr2015@outlook.com  
www.nvtr2015dumfriesandgalloway.com

**5 April – Museum Open Day**, Lincolnshire Road Transport Museum, Whisby Road, North Hykeham, Lincoln LN6 3QT 01522 500566  
e-mail: info@lvvs.org.uk  
www.lvvs.org.uk

**5 April – Transport Fest**, Museum of Power, Hatfield Road, Langford, Maldon, Essex CM9 6QA, 01621 843183  
e-mail: enquiries@museumofpower.org.uk  
www.museumofpower.org.uk

**5 April – Vintage Car Show**, Amberley Museum & Heritage Centre, Station Road, Amberley, near Arundel, West Sussex BN18 9LT, 01798 831370  
e-mail: office@amberleymuseum.co.uk  
www.amberleymuseum.co.uk

**5-6 April – Easter 1940s Event**, Crich Tramway Village, Town End, Crich, Matlock, Derbyshire DE4 5DP, 01773 854321  
e-mail: enquiry@tramway.co.uk  
www.tramway.co.uk

**5-6 April – Medway Festival of Steam & Transport**, The Historic Dockyard, Chatham, Kent ME4 4TZ, 01634 823800  
e-mail: aalmond@chdt.org.uk  
www.thedockyard.co.uk



**5-6 April – 28th Weston Park Transport Show**, Weston Park, Weston Under Lizard, Shropshire TF11 8LE, 091922 643385  
e-mail: transtar@talk21.com  
www.transtarpromotions.com

**9-12 April – Great North Steam Fair**, Beamish Museum, Beamish, Stanley, Co Durham DH9 0RG, 0191 370 4000  
e-mail: museum@beamish.org.uk  
www.beamish.org.uk

**11-12 April – Rail Road 2015**, Model Railway & Transport Show, Astley High Sports College, Yew Tree Lane, Dukinfield, Manchester SK16 5BL, 07719 259638  
e-mail: superscout@sky.com

11-12 April – Eastern Counties Vintage Tractor Show, Norfolk Showground, Costessey, Norwich NR5 0TT, 07836 620506  
e-mail: roger.desborough@btconnect.com  
www.easterncountiesvintagefestival.co.uk

**12 April – Ride the Amberley Buses**, Amberley Museum & Heritage Centre, Station Road, Amberley, near Arundel, West Sussex BN18 9LT, 01798 831370  
e-mail: office@amberleymuseum.co.uk  
www.amberleymuseum.co.uk

**12 April – A-Z Spring Road Run**, start Warminster Central Car Park, Wiltshire BA12 9AD, 01747 823365  
e-mail: m.bailey1950@btinternet.com  
www.thectp.org.uk

**12 April – Spring Tractor Run**, Central Car Park, South Molton, Devon EX36 3BU, 01271 378019  
e-mail: srmvcontactus@bormanweb.co.uk  
www.smoltonvintagerally.co.uk

**12 April – Bus & Coach Show**, The British Commercial Vehicle Museum, King Street, Leyland Lancashire PR25 2LE, 01772 451011  
e-mail: enquiries@bcvmt.co.uk  
www.bcvmt.co.uk

**12 April – Skipton 4x4 & Vintage Spares Day**, Skipton Auction Mart, Gargrave Road, Skipton, Yorkshire BD23 1UD, 01697 451882  
info@markwoodwardclassicevents.com  
www.4x4sparesday.co.uk

Please check details with organisers before travelling long distances. Vintage Roadscene publishes this listing in good faith and cannot be held responsible for any changes or inaccuracies in the information given.



# WHAT A DIFFERENCE A YEAR MAKES...

*Jim King has sent us a report with some great pictures from the Great Gillingham Gathering on Sunday, 22nd February. We'll bring you his report and more pictures of some of the lovely old vehicles which were at this year's event, but two stood out, compared with their appearance at Gillingham last year...*



The 1947 AEC Mammoth Major, JNY 484, now fully restored in the livery of Jack Rosser, Haulage Contractors of Pontlliw, near Gorseinon, in South Wales, by owner Mark Allen of Bradford-on-Avon, Wiltshire, seen at Warminster, during the CTP 17th Gillingham Gathering in Dorset on 22nd February 2015, complete with a draw-bar trailer, compared with how it appeared at last year's event.



The 1959 ERF 54G, XLO 975, 1959 of Ray Tuck of Devizes, Wiltshire, seen at Kingston Deverill on the road run during the Gillingham Gathering on 22nd February, back in the livery of Union Cartage Company of London EC1, and as it appeared at Warminster at last year's event.



## TUNNEL CEMENT

In answer to an enquiry from Ken Leary in Vintage Roadscene issue 181, December 2014, asking for an article on Tunnel Cement transport, for which his father used to drive various AEC lorries, may I therefore try to reply to this gentleman's request in the manner in which it was made, by submitting the following short article, with a few of the 80 or so Tunnel AEC photos I have.

Shown in the first picture is an AEC Monarch four-wheeled platform lorry, dating from between 1936 and '39, when a total of 18 such Monarchs were purchased direct from AEC at Southall. When World War II started, as can be observed from the picture, taken within the West Thurrock cement works, white-edged wings and a single headlamp were the order of the day.

The box visible under the nearside quarter-light was known as an 'Autovac', used to suck fuel up from the tank, before diesel pumps and injectors became standard. The deep-skirted bodywork fulfilled two very important purposes; firstly it was hard-wearing for six ton loads of bags and, secondly, the sides were used to promote the company's name.

Fleet colours were grey, with green signwriting. It is fairly certain that this particular Monarch would have spent much of its working life at West Thurrock.

A former transport manager at this works was convinced right from the start that, as London's AEC buses gave first class service, vehicles made by that company were just what he wanted. An initial order for six Mammoth Major six-wheelers and 12 Monarch four-wheelers was therefore more than doubled within a matter of months, resulting in 15 six-wheelers and 21 four-wheelers, all of which worked solidly for the next eight years, apart from three Mammoth Major six-wheelers, commandeered by the army for the war effort.

Another early photocopy of a West Thurrock scene shows 20 AEC Mammoth Major six-wheeled platforms, parked line abreast over a weekend, with sister lorries facing them in

shadow. The four front-facing lorries were Dodge 101Cs, which were bodied as four-wheeled platforms, dating from the middle to late 1940s.

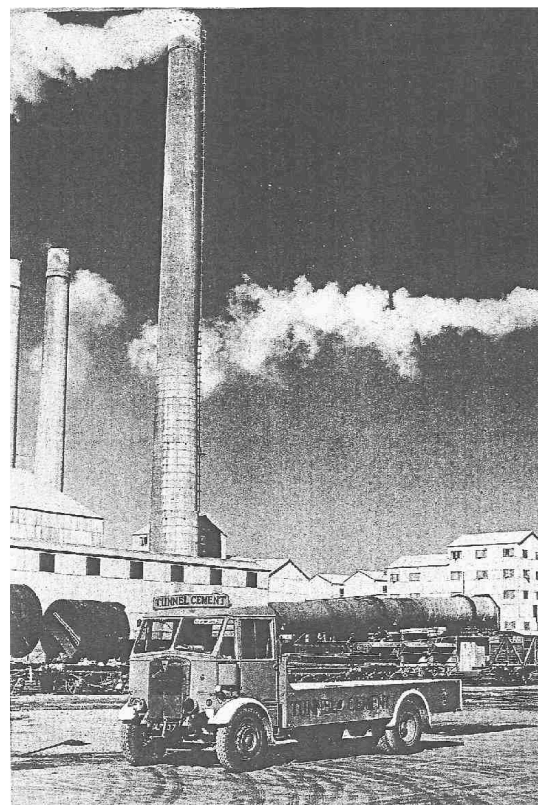
As a former driver with Rugby Cement for 22½ years, with 18 years on bags, I try to include in my collection photos of our former competition. Another picture shows three Tunnel Cement drivers, with two of their Monarch platform lorries. These drivers, I do believe, worked out of the Padeswood cement works, near Mold in Flintshire.

Eventually there would be at this works a total of 60 AEC lorries, made up of four, six and eight-wheeled platforms, plus bulk tankers.

Moving on a few years, and relating to Ken Leary's enquiry, I have included a picture of an AEC Ergo-cabbed four-wheeled bulk tanker. For readers acquainted with fleet liveries and colour schemes, this AEC would have been in the Tunnel Cement rosy red, with big white 'T's on the tank sides and the Tunnel lettering in black.

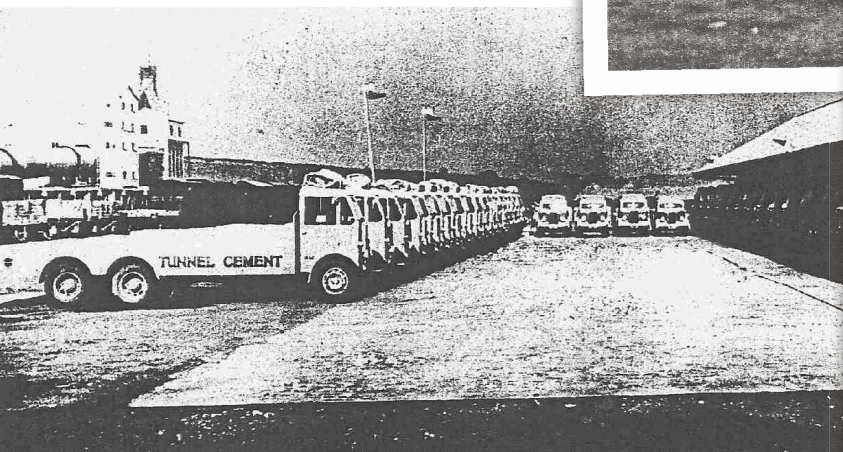
These particular AECS date from the late 1960s-'70s, with tank bodywork by Bonallack and the single Edbro tipping ram would lift the tan with comparative ease, during discharge.

Fleet no 013/40 may have been based at Brentford Depot, in Middlesex. It was taxed for operation at 16 tons gross, carrying a 10 ton bulk load. It's manoeuvrability in congested building sites would have been exceptional.



In an article printed almost 50 years back, Tunnel Cement was full of praise for the decision to buy AEC lorries, an arrangement that was to last for 34 years, before the switch to Volvo – but that is another story...

**Glen McBirnie, Rugby, Warwicks.**





## REMEMBER WHEN...

► **1:** A Dodge 300 Series four-wheeled platform lorry with LAD cab, KEX 407 (Gt Yarmouth, 1963), in the fleet of L G Perfect of Great Yarmouth, believed to be still in business today, loaded high with lettuces 'from over the water'.

► **2:** Remember the LV-cabbed four-wheeled ERFs of Staples Bros Ltd, of Sibsey, near Boston, Lincolnshire, again loaded high with vegetables for market. Their drivers were only on £8 a week and nobody ever left – I wonder why?

► **3:** An LAD-cabbed Leyland Comet, VBE 15 (Lindsey, Lincolnshire, 1959), with high sides for produce, supplied by Ford & Slater to W Stubbs, farmer and contractor, of North Somercotes, Lincolnshire.

► **4:** A Leyland Comet or Beaver, EJY 908 (Grimsby, 1954), fitted with a Homalloy cab and platform body to carry a container load with Ross Group's 'Sea Sparkle' quality fish. (Glen McBirnie Collection)



## JACK'S HILL CAFE GATHERING 2015

A5 Watling Street, Towcester,  
NN12 8ET



Do you remember days before tachos & mobile phones? Roping & sheeting. Handballing. Changing wheels. Looking for digs. Come and share your memories at this friendly drivers gathering.



Now in it's 4th. year.  
Open from 7.30 a.m.

## 19th. April 2015



## LOCAL STORY

The enclosed pictures show the vehicles of a local firm, of which the name is known county-wide. H J Coxen started out with a Ford Model 'T' at Keddington, near Louth, Lincolnshire. Then his son, John Coxen started a coal delivery business in our village, North Somercotes.

The company also went on to deliver heating oil as well. John's son Simon also drove for the firm, as well as being a talented mechanic, involved with the day to day running of the lorries. Simon has also built recovery trucks and is well-known in the area for recovering and transporting all manner of vehicles.

The coal business finished soon after John's death around 12 years ago. Some of the original drivers are still around, Gerry Davey and Mick Russell being two of them, still in the village.

If you would like to know more about the firm or should want to do a feature, then



Simon is an extremely nice and helpful chap to talk to. (*I'll be contacting him soon – Ed*)

I am currently restoring a Series I Bedford CF in the livery of John Coxen. Simon has kindly lent me a fuel tanker body to put on it for now, but later, when funds allow, it will be a replica

coal delivery truck. Keep up the good work.

**Paul Bundy, North Somercotes, Lincs.**

*We look forward to seeing the CF when the restoration is finished and hearing all about this interesting company.*





## EARLS COURT BUSES

As you rightly say, the more one looks at that stunning photograph inside Earls Court on your March front cover, and repeated inside the magazine, the more one sees in it. A wonderful slice of automotive history.

The Commercial Motor Show in question was in September 1958. There are two BUT trolleybuses in the picture, both for Glasgow Corporation. Double-decker TB107, one of 90 with Park Royal or Crossley bodies (this was a Park Royal), is facing the camera, while side-on to its right is TBS13 (wrongly numbered TBS3 at the show), a 34ft 5in long, Burlingham-bodied single-decker. It was the first of 10 bought under a Ministry of Transport concession for a trial that preceded the general authorisation of buses and coaches of up to 36ft length from 1961. Glasgow's trolleybus system closed nine years later, in 1967, but TBS13 survives as part of the Riverside Museum collection in Glasgow, currently in store away from public view in the city museums' resource centre.

Just behind TB107 is London Transport RM8, the first production design Routemaster, a pre-production double-decker built by AEC and Park Royal around a year before volume production began, and another vehicle that survives in preservation. It has possibly the lowest mileage of all Routemasters, as it spent nearly 18 years in the experimental department at Chiswick Works before finally going into public service in March 1976. It

came out of service again almost eight years later.

To the far right on the Guy/Sunbeam stand is another trolleybus, a twin-staircase Weymann-bodied Sunbeam MF2B for Bournemouth Corporation. The left-hand-drive double-decker on the AEC stand was one of 250 Park Royal-bodied Regent Vs for the Teheran Omnibus Board, the start of a regular flow of business that AEC and, later, Leyland enjoyed in meeting the Iranian capital's requirement for double-deckers before the 1979 revolution.

The double-decker nearest the camera, partly obscured by the Maudslay sign, is Sheffield 519, the first of a batch of six lowheight AEC/Park Royal Bridgemasters for the corporation fleet.

**Alan Millar, Editor, BUSES**

## MORE ON EARLS COURT

I loved the feature about Earls Court in the latest issue. I first went there as a five year old in 1956, for the Commercial Motor Show. My dad got free tickets as he worked for the Ministry of Supply and had been involved in the Austin Champ contract. The main thing I remember was running in and out of the horseboxes and cattle trucks in the bodywork section with my sister, but I do remember sitting in the cab of a Bedford CA van!

We went again in 1958, which I remember much clearer, seeing the new Standard Atlas vans and the new Land Rover Series IIs, with their more rounded bodywork style. I

remember going in the new Routemaster and the rear-engined Leyland Atlantean, which I was soon to see on the road in Gravesend, courtesy of Maidstone & District.

The next time I went was in 1962, when my dad took just myself and my mate. He let us go round on our own, but we had to meet up periodically at the Standard stand (my dad used to own a Standard 8 at the time), which was showing the new Standard 15 & 20 and the 7cwt van, which was more luxurious than dad's little 1953 Standard basic 8. Adjacent was the Triumph Courier van based on the Herald. The Forward Control Land Rover was a new introduction and the normal control Thames Trader was something new to me. I remember climbing into the cab of an Atkinson and being grabbed and pulled out with the comment "no you don't sonny"!

That was the last Commercial show I went to until 1970, but I was a regular at the car Motor Show from 1963 until 1974 and remember many exciting new models being introduced, which are now considered classics.

I went to the 1978 combined show at the NEC, having got free tickets for myself and my wife, from Dennis Vehicles which was part of the same Hestair group as the farm equipment division that I worked for at the time, and remember it being extremely crowded. It's a real shame that Earls Court is being pulled down, as I have great memories of going there!

**Pete Foster, Lutton, near Spalding, Lincs**

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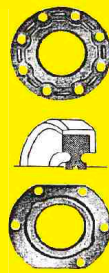
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## COACH DETAILS

You will probably have seen pictures of the Albion lorry which Tesco had restored for last years Goodwood Revival. This used to be a bus! UHW 343 was an Albion Victor with Heaver bodywork, very similar to many that went to Guernsey. It was new in 1955 to the Glenside & Barrow Hospital Trust in Bristol and was probably replaced in 1972 by an ex Bristol Omnibus Bristol LS, YHY 73, which ran until 1977. The Albion was preserved and rallied during the seventies, but Tesco claims it was found derelict in a scrapyard. (It had already been converted to a dropside lorry for further preservation, but was stolen and recovered, the owner probably

then, not surprisingly, losing interest – Ed). For the record, Barrow Hospital closed down in 2006 and Glenside Hospital had closed in 1994 though part of it remains as a museum.

Regarding VRS184 – a bit too much foreign for me but I guess you know your readers. You will probably get some feedback from bus enthusiasts about the Gilbert's article as the picture captions needed a lot more research (Guilty as charged, sorry – Ed).

AEC Regal, CDY 408, as nine out of ten bus enthusiasts will tell you, had a Harrington body, obvious by the styling on the rear end and large blind boxes. New to Skinners of Hastings, taken

over by Maidstone & District. GRY 45 is one of my pictures, I have the whole line up from this view, It had a Plaxton body, new to Provincial of Leicester.

I also have an identical view of JA 5514 to the poor shot in Victoria, must be the next film frame along. The sister to this vehicle, 5515 is in preservation. The view clearly shows a readable sticker in the window which says on hire to Maidstone & District. A lot of information is available on-line...

Ah well, better get back to sorting out Thames Traders pictures for a man who is restoring a six-wheeler, I've found 350 in my archive so far!

**Phil Moth, PM Photography**

## SAILING?

I take it that the Caldwell-Vales on page 11 of Vintage Roadscene issue 184 'sailed' along at 1 mile to the 'galleon'?

Sorry, I just couldn't resist it...

Earls Court - another act of historical vandalism in the name of progress, pity the facade couldn't have been included in the new development.

My last visit was to a Motorhome show in the 1990s.

Great read as usual.

**Terry Hammond, via e-mail**

## BETTER RAILWAYS FOR LONDON?

Malcolm Bates wrote a great article about Earls Court in Vintage Roadscene issue 184, but he cannot be allowed to get away with his howler, "... (London's) railway infrastructure of today is pretty much the same as it was back in the 1930s".

Really? Where has he been? Cleaner, faster, services throughout the suburbs, no steam trains, the Victoria Line, the Jubilee Line, Docklands Light Railway, Thames Link, passenger volumes up by massive percentages, faster trains. I could go on, but you get the drift.

Come on, Malcolm, credit where it's due.

**Simon Thorpe, Tetsworth, Oxon**

*I can see where you're coming from, but I wonder how many commuters would agree... But then, I'm biased, I prefer to drive anyway!*

## IT'S IN YORKSHIRE!

On page 52 of this article you show a photograph of an Austin Three-way van, in the caption for which it states Massey Coachbuilders of Market Weighton, Lincolnshire. For future reference, Market Weighton is, in fact, in the East Riding of Yorkshire.

Massey's were at one time a very large employer in this town but like many others have now disappeared. I do enjoy your magazine, but have to admit I prefer the old pictures and stories.

**D Green, via e-mail**

*Apologies for moving Market Weighton and thanks for setting the record straight.*

## HULL CORRECTIONS

I am writing on behalf of my father who is in a care home in Hull, regarding the recent Ray Newcomb article. My father worked at Hull Fish Meal & Oil Co (the same firm as Grimsby Fish Meal) and says Hull did not get their lorries from Ford & Slater, as Grimsby did. Hull's vehicles came from the Leyland dealer in Hull.

Also, why was the point

made about 40 ft containers now being shipped? They have been shipped since 1966 – and still now 10 ft, 20 ft and 30 ft are being used.

A while back, Mr Newcomb showed us a dock picture, saying Winteringham Timber could be seen, but at that time, it was A V North Timber Merchants.

The Hull Fish Meal image is an Albion museum copywrite photograph.

**W Jackson, Waltham**

*Thank you for the additional information. In response to your other questions, we all try our best to be accurate, but as time passes, facts can be forgotten, misunderstood or we can be misled. Nobody can be an expert on everything, everywhere. We use whatever suitable pictures we have to hand to illustrate the articles the best way we can. If you have further information or pictures of transport in Hull, we would be pleased to see them in the magazine.*



## FIESTA NOT ESCORT

In the two pages of comments and photographs, 'More Railway Vans', by John Raggett, of Meopham, photo 5 on page 68 states the vehicle is a Fiesta van, but the registration documents state that it is an Escort van. I believe the vehicle to be an Escort. For the Ford Escort Mk 3, the manufacturer produced both a conventional van, with a van bodyshell with twin opening rear doors, and also a van based on the estate car bodyshell, the latter having a one-piece tailgate. The Fiesta van always utilised the car body shell, but with blanked off rear windows. I believe that had the photograph been of a Fiesta van, the side panel would have been much shorter.

The photograph of the Earls Court Commercial Motor show, on the front cover has, I believe, a couple of anomalies. Although the date is not defined, the vehicles on the Thames stand would I believe indicate the year to be between 1957 and 1961. However, there are manufacturer name boards for both Trojan and Sunbeam. As far as I am aware Sunbeam never ever produced a commercial vehicle. I made contact with the Trojan Owner's Club and apparently the last vehicle produced was a small coach in 1961 and after that the company ceased to manufacture commercial vehicles. However the vehicles depicted on the Trojan stand would appear to be vans with one sign-written with the name of a dry-cleaning company.

**David Marks, via e-mail**

*Further to my email sent earlier this week regarding the Trojan stand at the Commercial Motor Show, here is the text of an e-mail exchange I had with the Trojan Trust:-*

I subscribe to a magazine called Vintage Roadscene and within the current edition (March 2015) there is an article regarding the Commercial Motor Shows held at Earls Court.

The cover photograph features a show which I estimate to be between 1957 and 1961 and includes a Trojan stand. The Trojan vehicles on display are 'vans' with one sign-written in the livery of a dry-cleaning company. Do you have any dates regarding when Trojan stopped manufacturing/marketing commercial vehicles?

I have made contact with the Trojan Owner's Club and they confirm that Trojan made a small coach in 1961, but after that the manufacture of commercial vehicles ceased.

## TO: DAVID MARKS

Yes, Trojan did produce the last proper commercial vehicles in 1961. In 1959, the company switched all its van production to the slightly larger forward control vans and small coaches, but the last of these was produced in 1961. Our Trust has a 1959 forward control coach and van and a 1961 forward control coach.

However in 1962 Trojan did produce 18 van versions of the Trojan 200 bubblecar, so arguably these were the last commercial vehicles Trojan produced, though they were not a great success.

I hope that this answers your questions but do please get back in touch if I can be of any further help.

**David Hambleton**

*Thanks to both Davids for this. The Sunbeam in question was the trolleybus manufacturing company, taken over by Guy in 1948, for which a separate motor show stand was allocated, like AEC and Maudslay. The information on the last Trojan vehicles is also most interesting.*

## NEW ZEALAND MUSEUMS, MOTOR SHOWS AND ESCORT VANS

Another very good issue. I went to the Wanaka museum featured in John Raggett's photo-feature last year. It is quite an experience, with loads of exhibits crammed into hangars, as well as those in the open. It is a complete contrast to the immaculate car museum at Blenheim, and both are fascinating. On the other hand, the Roadline vans recalled memories of unloading deliveries in the 1970s.

As well as going to several Motor Shows at Earls Court with my dad and uncle, I worked a day there on my firm's stand at the 1977 Ideal Home Exhibition. I also went to that first Motor Show at the NEC; it was incredibly crowded and hard to see anything. I was concerned to read that the NEC was being sold off because, although in the early years it had some really officious staff, it has got better in recent times. I hope it doesn't go downhill again. Mind you, with the major new hotel and shopping development they are building, traffic and parking could become a problem.

I do not often get the opportunity to submit a correction, but the van on page 68 is an Escort 'Combi', not a Fiesta. It was based on the three-door Escort estate, so had a one-piece tailgate. It was Ford's equivalent of the Astravan, but didn't seem to enjoy the same level of success. I believe Britain was the last market to take the Astravan, after it had been discontinued everywhere else.

The estate-based van filled a certain role with engineers and site supervisors. In the 1970s and early '80s, firms like DER Television Rentals had Ford estate cars panelled-in as vans, I think they also had 1300cc-engined Cortina Mk Vs, which weren't a listed model. Triumph were ahead of the times with its Herald-based Courier. Another example was the Simca 1100 van, at one time a common sight, which later became available as what must have been one of the first high-tops such as the Astramax.

**Quentin Gallagher, Horndean, Hants**



## STIRLAND'S SEDDON

I have this week bought a copy of the Vintage Roadscene 'Road Transport Archive' dealing with Seddon vehicles and it is superb.

On page 97 are two photographs of a J Stirland Ltd Seddon unit. There were two of this model in the fleet, with consecutive registration numbers. I used to sometimes drive one of the other on

the Aldershot trunk job from 'Boots' at Beeston. Mostly, I used an Atkinson Borderer.

The correct model designation of the Seddons should be 32-4-6LXB, as the firm only ran four vehicles with the Gardner 6LX engine, and these were Atkinson Borderers. Both the Seddons were bought second-hand by J Stirland Ltd

**David Willicombe, Nottingham.**



## MAUDSLAY AND PROCTOR

Thank you for another inspired collection 'Caught in Time on Location', great. On Page 25, a Morris 'Tonner' is featured at that rally in Australia. The earlier examples up to sometime in 1926 only carried 'MORRIS' on the radiator, so that is an early one. It was very interesting to see that Maudslay Mustang on page 5 for Gonzalez Byass.

On one of those 'Med cruises', from which pictures were featured in the magazine we visited this company's wonderful plant at Jerez. After the customary guided tour, we finished up in the visitor centre/shop area. On one of the walls there was an informative panel showing the process from grape to bottling. Under transport, amazingly, this old photo of a Mogul was depicted. Using my all new digital camera, I was delighted to be able to capture this, you can see 'Transport' on the image.

I now kick myself for not capturing a photo of one of that sherry company's fleet of Leyland Marathon tankers on Dartford Trade Park back in the 1980s. Our unit was next to the Gonzalez Byass one; we were there 1987-90, when their black arctic units were parked up every day. Another example of 'If Only'!

I greatly enjoyed Malcolm's Earls Court article and was unaware that any artic units were built by Proctor. Life is full of amazing coincidences, today in Exeter in a charity shop, I found an odd copy of Commercial Motor from 1953, almost a bargain at £4.50. Enjoying a tea and biccie and a browse this afternoon and, would you believe it, what could well be that same vehicle is shown at a canning factory, where palletisation was already in use. The Hereford registration dates to January 1949, so it all fits. Please see the attached.

**Allan Bedford, via e-mail**

*The Proctor Mk III was the artic model, of which it is believed only one was ever built – so it looks as if this was the one...*



October 16, 1953

279

THE COMMERCIAL MOTOR

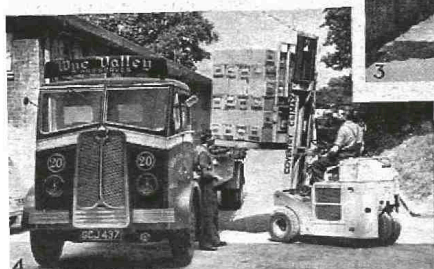
aced exactly in position by the truck. Loading occupies only few minutes, the turn-round time merally being less than 10 minutes. In the latest pallet-carrying van a dding support is raised under the centre of the stillage to transfer same ( the load from the sides. The eight of the payload is, as near as ssible, kept below the limit recommended by vehicle makers. Cartons and packages are of etangular shape and can be interlocked on the pallet to stabilize the ad. Paper is placed between the yers of 7-lb. jars, which are loaded parately, to act as a packing and revent movement. For transferring

(3) The fork truck has multiple uses, including the transport of wire crates containing canned fruit from the factory to storage sites. The driver has little idle time. (4) A Proctor oil-engined articulated unit is one of the vehicles used on a shuttle service between the Exbury depot of British Canners, Ltd., and the canning factory in Hereford. The produce is loaded on standard 60-in. by 40-in. pallets.



the pallets and stillages sho distances in the stockrooms, Ya and Towne hand trucks a employed.

Payload is not reduced by the use of pallets, and as it is normal for the produce to be systematically loaded in route-delivery order, no difficulty is experienced by the driver with unloading from the rear. When the delivery points cannot be plotted exactly, one of the platform for-



## SHOW AMBULANCE IN NORTHERN IRELAND

I have just received the March edition and found something of particular interest to me. At the bottom of the cover picture and on the Karrier stand there is an ambulance that I believe I recognise. When I joined the Northern Ireland Hospitals Authority ambulance service in 1964, there were a number of similar vehicles to the one pictured. They were, I believe, powered by a four cylinder Humber Hawk engine and were hopelessly underpowered for their role as emergency ambulances.

Most of these vehicles were built by Belfast bodybuilders Harkness, with one exception. The exception had a slightly different dome over the cab and was fitted with a chrome bumper, while the others were painted red. It also had chrome mirrors, chrome rear door hinges and a chrome radiator grill, unlike the others in the fleet.

I think that this vehicle was bodied by Lomas and it was fitted with that company's patented sliding stretcher fitting. When I asked why this vehicle was different, I was told that it was the first of its type in the fleet and had been so finished because it had been displayed at Earls Court. As all of those in the NIAS fleet were painted cream with red front wings, I would be surprised if the vehicle pictured had not had the NIHA livery.

This ambulance was fleet number 163 and was allocated to the Erne ambulance station in Enniskillen, County Fermanagh. It was regularly crewed by Leading Ambulance man Kit Johnston and an orderly. Kit kept 'his' ambulance in pristine condition throughout its service.

Sadly after his retirement, Kit and his wife Jessie were both killed in what has become known as 'The Poppy Day bomb' in Enniskillen.

These ambulances were superseded by the 'Walk-Thru' Karriers, with the more powerful six cylinder Humber Super Snipe engine. I have driven both types of Karriers and also the much superior Daimler DC27 ambulances, and there was really nothing to touch the Daimler for comfort and speed.

There has been mention and pictures in the magazine during the years of the Daimlers but I can't recall a article about these excellent vehicles, perhaps you might consider more detail on these in the future. There are a small number of Daimlers in preservation and one of these was restored by retired ambulance staff here in Northern Ireland. This vehicle, along with a preserved Walkthrough Karrier, is currently in the keeping of Northern Ireland Ambulance Service.

This information may be of little interest to your readers but the picture brought me many memories, I am convinced that this is the actual ambulance.

**Artie McMurray, Belfast**

*Of course this is of interest to our readers. It's coincidences like this which keep us all going. Thanks for all the extra information*

## ELECTRIC VEHICLES

In the hope that it is of interest, I can provide a few details about the electric vehicles that are shown in the excellent 'More Dairy Delights' feature in Vintage Roadscene issue 182.

The Morrison-Electricar, LPE 380, is an example of the popular 20 cwt CM model, while the pedestrian-controlled vehicle on page 33 is most likely a Manuletric Model 3.

The Brown & Harrison's Dairies fleet no 4, MCR 356 is a Midland 20-30 cwt. The dairy also purchased the small – and uncommon – Midland 10 cwt Vandot model. Nos 1, JOW 164, and No 6, KCR 215, were of this type, others may have been registered KCR 763 and NOW 146.

Moving away from the battery electrics, for many years, the Midland Counties Dairy at Wolverhampton used Miers Transport for its milk collection needs. I understand that, at some point, Miers became a wholly-owned subsidiary of MCD – perhaps one of your readers can confirm (or otherwise) that this was so.

**Paul Gray, Birmingham and  
Midland Motor Omnibus Trust, Wythall.**



## SMITHFIELD MARKET PICTURES

As Smithfield Meat Market has been featured recently in Vintage Roadscene, I thought you might be interested in these photographs which I took there on 2nd May 1984.

All but one feature vehicles to the then new 38 tonnes gross combination weight on five axles, with tri-axle reefer trailers, with three Scottish and two Irish vehicles.

The trailer in the livery of Ewan Booth, a well-known Peterhead-based fridge operator, was being pulled by an owner-driver called Joe Finney from Peterhead, with his Mercedes-Benz 1833, A882 DSA (Aberdeen, 1983). The Scania 142M, XSA 412Y (Aberdeen, 1983) belonged to Bain of Tarves, an Aberdeenshire supplier of beef and other meat. The DAF 2800, BSS 649T (Aberdeen 1978-9), was in the fleet of Mathers of Inverurie, Aberdeenshire meat wholesalers.

The other DAF, a similar model, PIJ 8887 (Downpatrick, N Ireland, around 1981)



was in the fleet of McGeown International, based in Rathfriland, Newry, while the Scania 141, YBI 122 (Co Monaghan, around 1980) with the tandem-axle box trailer was operated by another well-known Irish haulier, Carna Transport, based in Castleblayney.

**Gordon Mitchell, Wakefield.**



## THE VAN THAT NEVER WAS?

During a recent visit to our local antiques shop, I came across an Oxford Diecast limited edition model of a Post Office Telephones Bedford CA van, model No CA009, mine is No 0766 of 2,000 produced. It immediately aroused my



curiosity because I wasn't aware that Post Office Telephones ever operated such a vehicle.

The lettering on the doors, in addition to the obvious 'Post Office Telephones' reads 'PO Engineering Dept, 2-12 Gresham Street, London EC2', which has the ring of authenticity about it.

As I always base my models on an actual vehicle, I set about researching the prototype on which this model was based. All my efforts came to a dead end, even the registration number TOH 148 gave nothing away. Nevertheless, I set about detailing the van, even though I had no photographic evidence to work on. I assumed that the bumpers would be painted black rather than the chrome ones on the model, as these were more or less

confined to the 'Dormobile' variant.

Similarly I guessed that the interior would have been light grey with brown vinyl seats. I added a ladder to the roof, a driver figure, tax disc and diesel stain under the filler cap, as can be seen in the photograph. But did this van ever really exist or is it simply the manufacturer's way of gaining more mileage from an existing casting?

Could it be perhaps that the Post Office Engineering Department ran evaluation trials on the Bedford CA? I would really love to know. All the same, I now have a model of a vehicle which could have been a common sight on the roads of the 1960s. Can any knowledgeable reader throw any light on the subject?

**Graham Dungworth, via e-mail.**

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# Top Rankin

Tailscene

*This picture was taken during a visit to a major transport company's new depot in the North-east around 1960.*



**A**pologies for the dreadful pun in the heading, based on a pop song I remember that I used to like, but there you are. The company in question was R Rankin & Sons Ltd, based in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, which had added a new depot at North Ormesby, Middlesbrough, which appears to have specialised in tanker transport. However, the company is believed to have run vehicles with different types of body on other work, presumably from its main depot in Newcastle, which is where all the vehicles were registered. It was obviously successful, as it was taken over by the Transport Development Group in 1962, not so long after this picture was taken.

The newest vehicles to be seen here would have been new in 1960. An interesting cross-section of the company's tanker fleet was on display here, all eight-wheelers. At the front, on the left, was a Leyland Octopus, registered 858 NBB in 1960, one of the last to be fitted with the so-called 'Mouth-organ' cab, before the LAD cab was introduced on the model. Another similar nearly new 1960 Octopus was parked third from the right, 431 MVK, while an older example from 1953 is on the far right, SBB 163.

A fourth Octopus can be seen at the back of the yard, probably RTN 767 from 1952, which was included in another picture, taken of some of these vehicles

inside the building on the left, which is the garage. This and the two new Leylands had round 'general purpose' tanks, while the older one on the right had an 'oval-shaped' cylindrical tank, of the style usually used to carry fuel, such as petrol.

In between the two Leylands on the right is a Scammell Routeman Mk I, 9 JTN, registered in late 1959, also with an oval tank. The other three tankers to be seen were Atkinson L1586 eight-wheelers, with the earlier coachbuilt, so-called 'bow-fronted' cab, WBB 862, on the left, and XTN 217, both new in 1955, on the right, with oval tanks, and YTN 370 of 1956, with a round tank, in the middle.

The service vehicles seen at the rear

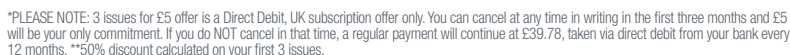
were a Scammell Pioneer, probably ex-War Department – remember that in those days most large transport operators would keep a recovery vehicle on strength, to tow back broken down vehicles to base for repairs in their own garages – and the service van, a new Commer FC1500 (which later became known as the PA, PB and finally Dodge Spacevan).

All the vehicles, including those which were a few years old, were in excellent condition, clean and undamaged, smart in what looks like a dark green and red livery. I would be pleased to hear from any readers who can add information about this company, its operations or its vehicles... (CHC abd955)



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